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DR. T. G. RICHARDSON,

NEW ORLEANS, LA.,

AND

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE DR. DEMARQUAY,

PARIS, FRANCE.

BOOK FIRST.

FILIA NULLIUS.

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

PART FIRST. 1850.

CHANGES AT BOUIE'S HILL.

CHAPTER I

"The unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
That man did ever find."

THREE years after the "Battle of the Witchita Peak," of which this truthful historian has told you elsewhere, he again finds some of the actors in the drama he is about to write in the Indian Territory. It was Christmas eve. The day had been one of those warm days that sometimes linger into December in the Southern States. Although the wind was changing from point to point in gusty swells, it had not chilled the evening. November had been unusually cold and stormy, and the blasts of two "northers" had stripped the foliage from bush and tree, except where the scrub-pines and red cedars held their dark-green colors against the hills.

But on this December evening there was the warmth of summer in the soft twilight, though the trees had lost the rippling melody that sings

through the quivering leaves of summer. The only sounds that disturbed the profound silence of the woods were occasional puffs of the changeful wind, then a quick rustling would sweep the forest floor, leaving a deeper stillness in the long intervals between the gasping breaths.

Over the wooded knolls and down the ravine—through which the footpath led from Fort Gibson to the quarters of Major Leszinksky at Bouie's Hill—into the stillness of the forest and the twilight, came a soldier, an Indian, and a nondescript giant on crutches whose face was seamed with deep scars.

The three men halted at a little rustic lodge at the foot of Bouie's Hill, just within the orchard-gate, through which the road wound upward to the comfortable house of hewn logs that, with its broad piazza and flanking additions, crowned the wide, flat summit. The Indian stopped to close the gate—while the soldier assisted his companion up the steps which led to the porch of the cabin—then he entered the house and brought out a buffalo-rug, and was soon lying at ease between the rough settle where the cripple was installed and the steps where the soldier was seated. The latter puffed vigorously at his pipe for

a few seconds to keep it alight, and then resumed what was evidently an interrupted and discursive homily:

"Somehow this is the solemnest Christmas eve ever I met up with. Seems more like they was fixin' up thar"—pointing to the house on the hill—"fur a funeral than fur a weddin'. It's jest four years to-night sence I come h'yar with the news of the massaker at Castaler's, when the Pawnees and the Ottoes was on the war-path; an' they didn't spar' a human, in nary place they struck over on the Kiameshi, except the little Capin."

He stopped abruptly and glanced at the Indian; then, after a moment's hesitation, began in a lower tone, as though that were sufficient concession and apology for words which might not be altogether agreeable to one of his hearers.

"There's been a power o' changes since that time the Big Chief"—with an amicable nod to the Indian—"found the child and saved her from the tomahawks of his people. That trip to the Witchita hills, when we was a-follering his trail, a-ready to kill him like a wolf or a rattler, not a-knowin' he was more the little Capin's cap*tyve* than she was his'n, got me the *manner-*

poker and Capin Carson a wife. He was on'y a leftenant that time when he was a sarchin' fur Mrs. Leszinksky's baby and found Coacooche's darter. I'm free to say he mought a-married a white lady back in the States and a-done wuss. But howsomdever his gain has been, thar an't nary doubt 'bout *mine*. It was the stoppin' o' liquor fur me. That mornin' after we had to get up and get out o' the Semenolie valley my narves was a-shakin' and I was a-wantin' liquor wuss than a starvin' man could vittals. When we stopped at the Washiter ford to breathe the horses and let Mrs. Leszinksky rest a little, 'cause she was weak and poo'ly then, I jest got bold out o' desperation, and I went up to whar the doctor was a-standin' by that angel of a woman, and I said I must have a drink or I couldn't go another step. The doctor took out a flask and was gettin' a cup to pour it in when Mrs. Leszinksky called me. So be an' I should live till etarnity ended I never could forget how she looked or what she said. She laid one o' them little white hands o' hern on my arm, and handed me with the other a tin cup full o' coffee they had brought from the valley fur *her*. Her voice was mos' gone, what with the tire o' that long

night's ride and the pain that had commenced then to kill her the slow way it took her at last. But broke up, and between catches fur breath as she had to speak, thar wahn't never on this 'arth nor in heaven no sweeter music than that sweet voice o' hern when she said: 'Take this coffee, Bob, and fight the tempter. You can do it, because you are brave and true; you will, because we who love you best ask it. I may not live to get home. If I do I shall not have long to stay with you all, and I want you to make me a promise.' Jes' then I broke the grip o' liquor. I knowed I would, the first word she said—I knowed what she meant when them bright blue eyes o' hern, that shined like the cl'arest, brightest sky, looked at me as she give me the coffee. From that day to this I thank God I didn't make her wait or let her say what the promise was she wanted me to make. I took the cup from her, and before I tasted a drop thar was in it I jest went down on my knees by whar she was, and swore to God and her that while thar was a Leszinksky on 'arth that keered fur me to quit liquor I'd quit. You see the on'y kind o' resolution ever I kept was one that had some end to it spec-i-*fied.* It's the on'y kind I could keep.

You see when I used to swar off for ever, that was a sort o' blind time; and by not rightways a-knowin' just when 'twould end I allays busted it. All that day thar was a powerful strain on me—and me needed to go on to the regiment; but Leftenant Carson had to go and bring a ambulance and a escort. You know we was afeard o' trouble with the Semenolies, whose village had been raided by some murderin' rascals on our side; and we was *more* afeard that the volunteers they belonged to wouldn't disband without fightin' the Pawnees we had just made peace with, and who had brung us safe from the Semenolie valley.

"It was a mighty ticklish bizness all round; and wust of all fur me was the devil's tattoo that was a-beatin' in every narve and a-settin' me wild fur a drink.

"Then the Big Chief did me another thankee-job. In spite o' all the rumpus thar, with the devil broke loose in the woods betwixt the Creek nigger-catchers and the volunteers on our side, and the Semenolies on t'other, he sent one o' his warriors to Coacooche's village on the Canadian, and got me a tickler full o' that bitter black drink like the

Comanchee squaw give me over thar when I had that fit in the mountains. It busted the manner-poker, which was a-chasin' me, then and thar. Why, jest as soon as I drinked it I dropped in the bushes and slept till next mornin'. When the leftenant got back with the ambulance and a escort from our regiment, Mrs. Leszinksky made me get in it with her and the little Capin; and somehow I dropped off asleep agin, and never waked till we got to the camp at Little River. Then the next day I hearn you was a prisoner with the Comanchees."

Here the talker paused to relight his pipe, and nodded at the cripple, who moved uneasily, and then, as if compelled to fill the listening silence of the evening, said:

"It wahn't long afore you come fur me. I knowed I wouldn't be a prisoner long if you all could holp me—though I hadn't counted on the Big Chief thar, and I didn't know how the reg'*ment* had made out thar in that scrimmage at the ford. Arter I flanked the Comanchees in the timber along the divide, betwixt Wild Horse and Rush Creeks, I knowed whar the reg'ment mought get through

safe, so be and the reinforce*ments* stopped on this high bluff o' the Washiter, and shelled the woods across thar to the right, and cl'ared the underbrush. That was what I told Colonel Kearny when I got to whar he was camped, and that was what he sent me back to tell our *loo*tenant. But the Comanchees got me in the little trail through the holler, whar I had gone through a-goin. It sarved me right fur not a-havin' mo' sense. To trust to the Comanchees not a-strikin' my tracks—as if Injuns wahn't all eyes and ears on the war-path! The most mort-i-*fy*-in' thing was, they jest counted on my a-bein' a bawn fool, and I didn't noways disap*p'int* 'em. They cotched me like Abraham's ram, a-stuck in the mesquite bushes and the prickly p'ars, ready fur the sacri*fice*. Twice that day I thought my time had come. They tied my arms down behint me with a lari*at*, and they had another round my throat that they led me by to thar am*bush* in the woods near by the ford, a-prickin' me with thar knives when I didn't cl'ar the ground quick enough to suit thar move*ments*. They had tuck my blanket; but my huntin'-shirt and my brand-new buckskin

breeches was all cut and bloody with thar wasteful ways—to say nothin' o' the distressful feelin' o' my hide. Well, when they got over thar by the Washiter, and I was stiff and sore and wore out with the long, quick march, they loosed the lari*at*, that had cut the skin o' my swelled-up throat, and ordered me to hail our fellows, who I could see up thar on the bluff, just whar I had been sent to tell 'em to come. At first I couldn't speak; then they gin me water. Arterward they saw I wahn't a-goin' to speak, so they drew the lari*at* round my wrists sich a way that I've got a pa'r o' bracelets o' thar make yet." And the cripple looked at a cicatrized ring around his wrists as he continued: "I thought once o' hollerin' to our *loo*tenant, as was then, that the Injuns had me, but to shell away into thar am*bush;* then I got afeard they might come to holp me, and *not* shell the woods, which they was a-fixin' to do. So I just kep' still and they shelled the Injuns out, and me along with 'em, led by the lari*at*, that gin me a necklace to match my bracelets." He loosened his collar, with a shake of his head to prove its present freedom, and

concluded with: "Then I had to keep still, which you know, Starns, is most nateral to me." And he smiled at the soldier. The sarcasm, if intended, was of no avail, for "Starns" was ready and waiting to go on with his reminiscences.

"Well, you wahn't so still that mornin' the Big Chief and me got to the Comanchee village in the very nick o' time to get you out'-en thar roastin'-forks! We hearn you a-singin' afore we rounded the p'int at the foot o' the hill. I told the Big Chief somethin' oncomman must be up, becase I'd never hearn you a-goin' on that-a-way. If you had been a-whistlin' 'twould a-been more nateral; but somehow that hymn you was a-rollin' out sounded like a camp-meetin' in old Missoury. I was clean took out o' my reckonin' when we tarned the p'int and I seed you tied up to that hackberry-tree, with a slow fire a-curlin' into little red tongues round your legs. 'Twas mighty well them red devils had fixed you to roast slow, and left your leggins and moccasins on while they amused tharselves a-shootin' burnin' arrers all round, a-slicin' your face into the tree. And if they hadn't

a-spared your eyes, a-hopin' to see you flinch from thar arrers, you would a-had no eyes worth speakin' on, time we got you loose. As 'twas, what gives my liver a rise now every time I think on it is, they shrivelled the sinews o' the bravest trailer that ever walked in thar cursed country. But if it hadn't a-been fur the fix we found you in 'twould a-been worth while a-goin' fur you, to see what splendid fightin' a *real* warrior kin do when his blood's at the bilin'-p'int."

And the soldier looked admiringly at the Indian, whose eyes seemed to reflect the lurid light of battle as this vision of the past was uncovered in the present.

After a short pause to knock the ashes from his pipe, and adjust a quid of tobacco to a spot in his cheek where it would not interfere with speech, the soldier continued:

"I disremember what 'twas I said—most like thar was some tall swarin' in it, for the leftenant, as was then, hadn't broke me in to quit, which I've done to please him, leastwise excep' the 'casion is powerful provokin'. But that's nuther here nor thar; what I was a-goin' to say was this: The Big Chief knowed it was you we

had come fur. Now, he had promised Major Leszinksky—leftenant he was then—that he'd ransom you or take you from them crawlin' snakes. *An' he did it.* The rest on us didn't count fur much, though we done our best, too—but what a devil of a fightin' race we had arter we got you!"

The crippled giant looked up at the rosy sky as he said:

"It was the Lord did it. I don't mean no way to belittle none o' you nor what you done fur me; but the odds agin you was past the power o' man to overcome, if the Lord hadn't a-made bar' his arm."

There was a moment of stillness, then a few bars of a sacred melody rose through the soft air of that December twilight.

"Yes," said the soldier softly, as the voice of the cripple faltered and the sound was hushed, "that's it; that's the hymn the Big Chief thought was the death-song of a warrior:

"'When through fiery trials.'"

The cripple turned to his auditors a scarred and mutilated face, but the eyes were full of love and faith as he spoke:

"It's the life-song, and, if so be, the death-song, o' any o' God's creeters as clings to him and trusts him to help 'em."

The soldier cleared his throat: "I don't go much on preachers, or long norations 'bout religion. And I can't come to believe thar's any wuss hell 'an that a man totes inside of him when he's been brung up short and made to take 'count of his own meannesses; or when he's got the *manner-poker*, and sees what he knows *an't*, and feels the grip o' the devil that swims in every drap o' liquor. But I do think, Pike, you and our old leftenant, Major Leszinksky, has got the humanest feelin' for other folks, and the best friendship for God A'mighty, of any men ever I met up with. But you an't no better in your way than the Big Chief is in his'n; and you don't stick no closer to the textes you find in your Bible than he does to what the Great Spirit tells *him*. Now, I don't believe heaven's a narrer settle*ment* fenced in by burnin' brimstone. But I do believe Mrs. Leszinksky's thar; and when I know how *she* pitied me—an' me a wuthless drunkard—I know *God* an't a-goin' to turn agin me just when I'm at the last pinch a-tryin' to find a cl'ar path with the blindfold of

death on me. I an't a-sayin' nothin' agin your religion; you're a Baptist, and water's cleanin', but it don't allus wash the meanness out'en a man. The thing was, *you* hadn't waited fur that dip to do right by white, and black, and red. It an't what a man calls hisself but what he does that shows the grain in him. And thar's a heap o' *doin'* that God an't a-goin' to count agin a man.

"Sometimes it's thar lights as is deceivin' 'em, like the Big Chief when he's a-takin' scalps or layin' for a Comanchee. Sometimes it's thar weakness leads 'em into quagmires—I know—But here comes Capin Rue."

He sprang down the steps and then stiffened into a rigid military salute as a wee maiden came flying down the path under the leafless trees, shouting:

"Bob! Bob! Tell Pike—tell my chief—papa's coming. He is over there on the hill. I saw him through the spy-glass. O Pike! O my chief! papa's coming, papa's coming!"

CHAPTER II.

"A man might then behold
At Christmas, in each hall,
Good fires to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small."

EARLY in the afternoon of that same Christmas eve a lady, a servant, and the wee maiden who in our last chapter interrupted the soldier's discourse were busy decorators of the dining-room and wide-spread, hospitable table at "Bouie's Hill." There were rapturous but disconnected ejaculations of praise and delight from child and servant, as Miss Carson, with the steadiness of a firm, unhesitating character, tried effects and produced results that, according to her own judgment and the present lights of her admiring assistants, could not have been bettered. Those assistants were two. The first was a tall, stately mulatto woman, whose kindly face and large brown eyes were brought into full and effective relief by the bordering of silver hair that rippled in thick, soft waves be-

neath the gay Madras handkerchief wound above and around the erect and well-poised head. The smaller personage was the witching little despot known to us, some four years earlier than the date of this history, as "Baby Rue," now a slender, pale little maiden, whose tawny pallor was lit by scarlet lips and the flashing, changeful lustre of gray eyes that might have caught their color from the gleam of a Damascus blade. There was a wild, untrained grace in the child's every movement—a grace that comes of the perfect sympathy of body and soul, where action is the twin of thought. Every word that came through the mobile lips was foreshadowed in the expressive face and in the changing light of the beautiful eyes; and to every word a gesture was fitted.

There was little to hear in the dining-room—nothing to inform the reader either of present or past. Rue varied her exclamations with sudden dashes into the sitting-room to tell the gentlemen there of some new wonder; with swift rushes to the front piazza, where the spy-glass was poised to command an extended view of the road on the bluff some two miles distant from Bouie's Hill; with quick runs to the kitchen,

where, under the supervision of Sara's frequent visits, Mead's work as *chef* steadily progressed.

That I may conscientiously pick up and wind into the woof of this truthful, painstaking narrative a few threads that tie us to the past of the characters I am about to introduce, I shall jot down some broken bits of talk that Rue might have heard, had that brilliant butterfly rested alight a moment from her swift flights on that particular 24th of December, in the kitchen at Bouie's Hill, where a patriarchal negro iterates his complaints and comments:

"An't yo' dun fix de dinin'-room yet, Sara?"

"Yes, Daddy, everything's ready now; on'y Miss Mary Carson she's so partic'lar 'bout fixin' them posies roun' de plates."

"Well, yo' better leave her 'lone, an' stay heah an' see how Mead's a-doin' de roasts. I can't sot *my* mind to watchin' him, nohow. I'se in a daze wid all dese go-downs in de fam'ly. I didn't 'spec to stay heah long 'nough to see sich gwine'ns on. May-be it's de Lord's work, but it 'pears to me mighty like de debble had a finger in de pie. I an't had no peaceable 'ligious 'sperience sinct dat time dey all got back heah arter little Miss Rue was stoleded an' carried to

de Injun country. Dat was de fust of de settlin' of de sabages on dis place. I knowed dar wahn't no good gwine to come on it when Miss Marg'ret had dat cabin built yonder t'other side de big house fur dat Injun chief, case he spared Miss Rue out'en dat slaughter and gin her back. It was jes' a-flyin' in de face of Prov*idence.* An' yo' see, Sara, what a back-sat we'se all got. De fust thing dat happened arter Marse Carson marry dat young Injun woman showed it. Heah was Marse Stan an' Miss Marg'ret an' de baby sent t' Mexiker, an' yo' an' Oscar gone wid 'em; an' *we* all lef' heah wid nobody but Miss Mary Carson an' de Injuns. Not as I kin say de Big Chief stayed; but dar was dat Wildcat a-visitin' his darter heah, an' she a-visitin' him, an' red an' black Injuns a-comin' an' a-gwine night an' day. Dis an't been no Christian settl*ement* sinct dat time. 'Twant no wonder de Lord tuk Miss Marg'ret home. He knowed hebbin was better fur her dan dis place. But now Marse Stan has jes' gone an' done it fur sho'. Lord! Lord! I'se glad de Mason name's done lef' in ole Firginny. It's de Desinksky part o' Marse Stan dat's done made dis heah las' match. Now, de Cart'rets was somebody, an' Miss Mar-

g'ret was fit to walk in my Miss Mary's shoes; but dese *Caslers*—umph!—ah! dey an't no mo' dan half-breeds: outlandish folks mixed in wid a Injun streak. I *was* a-waitin' my time to go to de New Jerus'lem, but now I's shame to go dar. How *could* a 'spectable fam'ly sarvant, dat was *bawn* at Mount Hope an' brung up wid a gran' gen'leman like my marster was, face all de ole Masons up dar an' tell 'em what Marse Stan's been a-doin'? Why, 'twould raise a 'sturbance in de golden streets. All de bestest o' dem ole Firginny fam'lies 'ill be afeard to hurt de feelins o' de Masons, if dey ax me de news from down heah.

"I didn't used to want to outlive Marse Stan; but if de Lord's willin' I'd a heap ruther he'd go fust *now* an' 'splain dis bizness, 'f he can.

"Mead, you better turn dat turkey in de 'flectar. Not dat it matters much 'f 'tis scorched; dis an't no 'casion to be proud o' de Mason cookin'.

"Lord! Lord! when I *con*sider de Masons in de New Jerusalem, an' 'flects on dem dat's buried in ole Firginny, an' sees de latest skion o' de male side a-marryin' a quarter-bred French Injun, I feel like a-prayin' wid de profic, 'Let

dy sarvant 'part in peace'; an' I'd be glad, 'cept fur de rumpus I'd have to raise wid de judge's father, to say nuthin' ob de way ole Gen'ral Desinksky's a-gwine to swar 'bout dis crossin' a thoroughbred wid a scrub w'en he heahs 'bout it up thar."

Here Rue rushed in with a fresh gush of enthusiasm over Miss Carson's last *chef-d'œuvre* of decorative art, and dragged the stately Sara from the stool where she sat and pondered the questions propounded by the aged mourner in his jeremiad over the fallen glory of his master's house.

CHAPTER III.

There is something in the character and habits of the North American savage, taken in connection with the scenery over which he is accustomed to range, that is, to my mind, wonderfully striking and sublime. He is formed for the wilderness, as the Arab is for the desert. His nature is stern, simple, and enduring, fitted to grapple with difficulties and to support privations. There seems but little soil in his heart for the support of the kindly virtues; and yet, if we would but take the trouble to penetrate through that proud stoicism and habitual taciturnity which lock up his character from casual observation, we should find him linked to his fellow-man of civilized life by more of those sympathies and affections than are usually ascribed to him. It has been the lot of the unfortunate aborigines of America to be doubly wronged by the white man. They have been dispossessed of their hereditary possessions by mercenary and frequently wanton warfare, and their characters have been traduced by bigoted and interested writers. The colonist often treated them like beasts of the forest, and the author has endeavored to justify him in his outrages. The former found it easier to exterminate than to civilize; the latter to vilify than to discriminate. In peace the Indian has been the dupe of artful traffic; in war he has been regarded as a ferocious animal, whose life or death was a question of mere precaution and convenience.—*Traits of Indian Character*, WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE Pawnee chief was on his feet at the first sound of Rue's voice; and as she came flying down the hill he sprang lightly from the porch of the little cabin and caught her in his arms, she still calling as they passed on to the gate, "Papa's coming! My chief! my chief! papa's coming."

The impatient little princess had still a good half-hour to wait. I leave her surrounded by faithful subjects, and present to the reader another group I have left all this time alone in the sitting-room on the hill.

Captain Carson had arrived during the morning of the 24th from New Mexico by way of the Witchita Mountains. At Cañada and El Emboda, in the fight of the insurgents with Burgwin's dragoons and the volunteers from Missouri under Colonel Sterling Price, he had won his grade as first lieutenant. For the action at Pueblo de Taos, where Burgwin was killed, he was brevetted captain, and was soon afterward given a company in consideration of his gallant service at San Rosales.

At the time of his marriage to the daughter of the Seminole chief, Mrs. Leszinksky had invited Carson's sister Mary to come to Bouie's Hill and remain there with the newly-made wife during the absence of Carson and of the Leszinkskys.

In acknowledgment of Leszinksky's service to the government in the pacification of the tribes and the alliance formed with the Pawnees of Lo-loch-to-hoo-la's band, that officer had his

brevet as captain and was ordered to join General Taylor's "Army of Observation," then near San Antonio.

Knowing what the anxiety of Mrs. Leszinksky would be if separated from her husband, to whom she was passionately devoted, Dr. Randall, who was then—as at the time this story begins—stationed at Fort Gibson, advised that she should go with her husband. The one hope left for her health was change—change of climate and scene, and, as far as possible, entire forgetfulness of the harrowing anguish through which she had passed at the time of her little daughter's capture in the affair at Castalar's.

As we have heard from Uncle Abram, during the absence of the Leszinkskys the Seminole chief was a frequent visitor at Bouie's Hill, no less from affection for his daughter than to protect the interests of his allies, the Black Indians. Trusting to the justice of the President (who, in the third article of the last treaty with the Seminoles, was given final jurisdiction "in all contested cases concerning the right of property growing out of sales or transactions previous to the ratification of the treaty"), Coacooche* had

* Coacoochc—Wildcat, the Seminole chief.

demanded of General Arbuckle protection for his allies, who were now being claimed by the Creeks as the descendants of their escaped slaves.

Believing, as did every gentleman in the army, that by the treaties made with the Seminoles the honor of the government was pledged for the freedom and security of these negroes, General Arbuckle directed this persecuted people to encamp and remain upon the government reservation near Fort Gibson, assuring them that neither the Creeks nor the human sleuth-hounds who had followed them from Georgia should molest or enslave them. Once again in the history of Indian treaties *pledged faith was faithless.* The government ordered the Black Indians to return to their villages, promised them security—and then left them to the tender mercy of greed and hate. The Executive temporized and delayed judgment while giving semi-official countenance to the order for their return to the Creek country, and at last permitted, if it did not authorize, their capture by the slave-traders.

In all of the trials of this long-suffering tribe Coacooche had been their unfaltering friend and protector. He was frequently at Fort Gibson,

and more frequently in the Cherokee country, consulting with Chief Ross, who had never wavered in his advocacy of the rights of the Seminoles since that disastrous epoch when he had been the unwitting agent of the government in the deception practised upon them at the time of their removal from Florida.

As the sympathy of the master of Bouie's Hill was known to be warmly enlisted in behalf of this wronged people, the place naturally came to be the headquarters of the Seminoles during the time of the sojourn of their allies upon the reservation. Truly, in the language of Uncle Abram, "thar was red an' black Injuns all de time a-comin' and a-gwine."

When, some months after the birth of her son, Carson's wife, Alaha-Chayna, received his permission to follow him to Mexico, Coacooche came to take leave of his daughter; he had at Bouie's Hill a final interview with General Arbuckle.

The honest soldier frankly told the chief that he had been ordered to interpose no further obstruction to the arrest of the Black Indians by the traders who had bought them from the Creeks. The reply of the Seminole should be written in letters of gold in the history of the

North American Indians: "Coacooche will never desert the brave warriors who fought by his side in Florida for the homes of their tribe and the graves of their dead. The White Father at Washington has closed his ears to the truth and his eyes to the sight of the oppressed. He has ordered the Seminoles and their allies to the Creek country, that the slave-catchers may secure their victims. The traders in men, like hungry hounds, have tracked the Seminoles from Florida to Arkansas, and the White Father has told his soldiers to give the allies of the Seminoles to those dogs. Coacooche has turned his face to the setting sun, that he may find safety for his people and the brave black tribe that grew up beneath the shade of his father's lodge. He will build his nest high in the mountains near the eyries of the eagles. Like eagles the Seminoles will defend their nests. If the Creeks and the slave-catchers follow the trail of Coacooche their bones will whiten the crags."

All this story of the Seminoles came into the talk of the two gentlemen who were waiting in the little sitting-room at Bouie's Hill for the coming of their old comrade. Together they

unrolled the pages of the past four years. Carson's account of himself was so brief and modest that I have thought best to supplement his story with the knowledge I have gleaned elsewhere of his gallantry in the battle-field of New Mexico.

Colonel Beall's story, as he told it to Carson that soft December evening, was an outline history of the Mexican War, illustrated by battle-pictures which stirred the blood and set the pulses throbbing like martial music. But somehow into it all crept the same sad tale of the wronged Indian. For here and there into these battle-pieces flashed the stalwart figure of the great Pawnee who, through love for the child he had found in the war-path and adopted as his own, fought by Leszinksky's side like a brother.

The mention of Burgwin's gallant fight, where Carson was wounded, brought the talk again to Coacooche; and how, when Carson was nigh unto death, the Seminole chief found him and nursed him with the gentleness of a woman, bringing him, as soon as he could sit his horse, by slow marches to the valley high up the hills, where the tonic water of the boiling-spring and the pure air gave him health and strength. Then

Beall conquered the prejudice of a Florida veteran and acknowledged the wrong-doing of the white race and the gallantry of his old foe.

There was a long reflective pause, after which Carson took from a shelf of "King Stan's" bookcase a well-worn volume of Washington Irving that had been conned by camp-fires in the wilderness, and read this extract from *Philip of Pokanoket*, which might have been written of Coacooche. Beall nodded assent at every period:

"He was a patriot attached to his native soil; a prince true to his subjects and indignant of their wrongs; a soldier daring in battle, firm in adversity, patient of fatigue, of hunger, of every variety of bodily suffering, and ready to perish in the cause he had espoused. Proud of heart, and with an untamable love of natural liberty, he preferred to enjoy it among the beasts of the forest or in the dismal recesses of swamps and morasses rather than bow his haughty spirit to submission and live dependent and despised in the ease and luxury of the settlements. With heroic qualities and bold achievements that would have graced a civilized warrior and have rendered him the theme of the poet and the his-

torian, he lived a wanderer and a fugitive in his native land, and went down like a lonely bark foundering amid darkness and tempest, without a pitying eye to weep his fall or a friendly hand to record his struggle."

CHAPTER IV.

"The night hath a thousand eyes,
The day but one;
But the light of the whole world dies
At set of sun.

"The mind hath a thousand eyes,
The heart but one;
Yet the life of a whole life dies
When love is done."

AS Carson replaced the book the door opened and there entered our old acquaintance, Dr. Randall.

"How are you, Carson? I *am* glad to see you. Your color and size tell me I need not ask how is the wound. You do not look much like the fellow I saw in the Witchita last summer."

"You see," said Carson, as they warmly clasped hands, "the result of good nursing, the valley climate, and draughts from, and baths in, the Medicine Spring of the Witchita."

"Yes, it has wonderful tonic qualities. You may thank your wife, the climate, and the spring

that you lived to be Captain Carson. I congratulate you on your well-deserved promotion. Better late than never, but it should have come a year ago. It was gallantly won."

"It was dearly bought. Poor Burgwin's death was a greater loss to the regiment and the country than would have been a dozen moss-troopers like me."

"His death was a grief to us all. Nothing has so touched the soldierly feeling of the First Dragoons since Captain Moore was killed; but neither will the regiment forget how *you* avenged Burgwin's death or how stubbornly you fought to make his victory sure."

"Colonel Price and his volunteers did that. They fought like regulars. If Price would stay in the service I think he would prove that soldiers are sometimes 'born, not made.' But you know all this."

"Did you leave your wife in the valley?"

"Yes; since you were there last summer Coacooche has removed the remnant of the tribe of Black Indians to Mexico. Next spring he will go there with his wife and family, and such of the Seminoles as are now with him. His Mexican home is in the hills near Laredo. I fear he

will be a thorn in the side of our general on the Rio Grande."

"But your wife and her little children are not going to Mexico?"

"No; Alaha-Chayna will only stay in the valley this winter. When her father leaves for Mexico I will bring my wife and boys here."

There was greeting between Randall and Beall, questions of courtesy and friendship asked and answered, news given of old comrades, talk of old times and the changes since they had parted four years before. Carson told of having met Hartley in Santa Fé during the past summer. Randall asked:

"What was he doing there? Is it possible he served with the volunteers? I know he has not rejoined the regular army."

The answer came in an indignant negative: "Catch him with either! A cold-blooded scoundrel like Hartley return to the army as regular or volunteer! His patriotism would never induce him to risk his life—less than ever *now* that he has inherited one great fortune and is waiting the handling of another."

"I knew he had succeeded to the dollars of that miserly old peltry-monger, his uncle, but

did not know fortune intended to pelt him with further favors."

"Randall, that villainous attempt at a pun has but one excuse—a villain inspired it."

"Keep it up! Mine was made unwittingly, yours in cold blood. But about Hartley's expectation? Since his sister married Judge Cartaret, for Rue's sake I am curious about the Hartleys. Judge Cartaret was Mrs. Leszinksky's nearest relative, besides being her guardian and trustee, and, if Stan should die, would be Rue's."

"Well, you know all that and do not know what fortune I meant? Why, the great Cartaret estate, that doubled during Mrs. Leszinksky's minority and that will be quadrupled before Rue is of age."

"Carson, are you slightly demented?" said the doctor. "By what quibble of law do you suppose Hartley could ever have the slightest interest in the Cartaret estate?"

"Do you not know he has married Judge Cartaret's oldest daughter?"

"No," said the doctor, while Beall exclaimed:

"By Jove! I believe the meaner a man is the more surely he attracts money."

"Yes," Carson continued, "there is but one life between him and Rue's inheritance. If Tom Cartaret dies, according to Colonel Cartaret's will Judge Cartaret's next oldest child is Rue's successor."

"But, Carson," said the doctor, "you forget Rue herself. I do not think the imperious little princess will 'shuffle off the mortal coil' to oblige Hartley, so there are two lives between him and the 'Cedars'; but it is an aggravation to think he is even that near Mrs. Leszinksky's estate. I hope young Cartaret will marry and have a very patriarchal family."

This opened the flood-gate of Beall's anecdotal lore, and he cited so many cases in which capital aggregated capital, and rich men supplanted next of kin in even petty successions, that to calm Carson's prophetic rage and change the subject Randall asked:

"Will Mrs. Carson come to Bouie's Hill when she leaves the valley?"

"Yes; Stan wrote me the old arrangement must hold through all changes, though God knows I never should have anticipated such a change as this second marriage."

Rue came with a message from Miss Carson,

asking Colonel Beall's judgment in some grave matters of decoration. As he left the room with the child the dragoon, whose face was still clouded, asked the doctor abruptly: "Has Stan perfectly recovered his health?"

"No," said Randall; then he added, after a moment's pause, "He will never be as strong as when you saw him last. The wound from which he will never recover is Mrs. Leszinksky's death. It took all his courage as a man, all his patience and faith as a Christian, to bear that loss."

"And yet," said Carson in a half-angry tone, "he has married again. I can scarcely forgive Stan this treason to the purest woman, the most perfect love, ever won by man."

Both were silent until Randall, looking up, saw great tears falling over the bearded face of the soldier. Then he told the story—all the pitiful story of Margaret's illness and death: of his stay with her and Rue and Stephanie Castalar at San Antonio, while Leszinksky was with General Taylor at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma; of his journey, with his patient and the children, to Matamoras, where Mrs. Leszinksky could be nearer her husband and with her old friends the Andersons. He told of the deceptive

improvement in her health that finally mocked their hopes; of the parting when Leszinksky, after a short visit to Matamoras, had to hurry on to Camargo that he might rejoin General Taylor before the attack upon Ampudia at Monterey. He told how, in that last supreme moment of anguish, the wife reminded her husband of the promise he had made her in the Witchita valley—a promise to keep Rue with him, to give a home in his old age to Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. She recounted the Indian's faithful and unwearying service to her and to their child in Mexico, where his love to them had brought the chief afar from his land and his people. Then she talked of Stephanie; of the kindness of the Castalars in the happy early days of her life on the frontier; of Stephen's brave effort when he gave his life to defend their child. She asked that Stephanie should stay with Rue and be made to feel she had of right a home with the Leszinkskys; that Rue be taught never to fail in remembrance of the debt of love and gratitude owing to the dead Castalars.

Then Randall recounted more briefly a story Carson had already partly heard from Beall—the story of Leszinksky: how, twice wounded in

that heroic charge when the bishop's palace was stormed at Monterey, Lo-loch-to-hoo-la found Leszinksky, with his arm shattered by a grape-shot, lying unconscious amid the dead who had been mowed down in swaths by the Mexican artillery; and how the Pawnee chief brought him out of that fiery storm of battle to the ambulance where, with the corps of surgeons, Randall waited for the wounded. Here Randall's own words give the clearest picture of the past:

"We amputated Stan's left arm, and dressed the wound in the face that had been made by the splintered bayonet of a soldier who was killed by his side; the face-wound was slight, but the arm was so crushed and shattered it had to be cut at the shoulder. He had begged, just as soon as he recovered consciousness, that it might be done at once, saying: 'I must be sent back to Camargo, and then to Matamoras. I *must* reach there before my wife hears I am wounded. You know, Randall, she would insist on coming to me, so patch me up and let me take the news to her. She will see then I am not dangerously hurt. If you do not the excitement and the anxiety will be worse for her.' There was a tone in those last words I could not resist. That night I

started with him to Camargo—one hundred and eighty miles in an ambulance. *You* will know how he suffered. When we reached Camargo and got him on the steamer his fever was at its height. But during it all his only impatience was at any delay; I do not think he had a thought that was not of his wife."

There was a break in the voice of the speaker; then, after a short pause and a hasty glance at Carson, whose face was shaded by his hand, Randall continued:

"Mrs. Leszinksky was dead when we reached Matamoras. We carried Stan to her room only to look upon the coffined face of the woman who had blessed his life and made ours better—"

Again there was a hush; then, as a child's merry laughter rang from across the hall, there came a half-stifled groan from Carson, and the yellow, glinting rays of the burning lightwood were reflected in the drops that fell thick and fast upon his tawny beard.

Randall had walked to the window. Then, as if thinking the story must be finished, still standing with his back to the dragoon, he went on:

"There were a lot of wounded to be sent

home, and I got leave to exchange with the surgeon in charge. At New Orleans they were sent to the hospital or discharged, so I came here with Stan, and the children, and . . . Mrs. Leszinksky's remains. . . . You know, of course, she is buried here, as she wished?"

"Yes, I know; go on, tell it all."

"Stan's recovery was slow. All of the next year he was at Bouie's Hill. Your sister Mary had gone home—you remember your father was ill—so Stephanie Castalar was growing to womanhood dependent solely upon her protector and guardian. Mr. and Mrs. Page were gone, so were the families of all of our old comrades. The new people were quite different: I do not think there is another such set of gossips and mischief-makers in the army as that which chance had then gathered into the fort. You know Stan's character—how thoroughly unselfish he is; how modest in his estimate of himself; how tender and considerate of every member of his household; how chivalric and respectful to women. Stephanie could not help but love him. I saw it long before the girl could have defined the feeling that was filling her heart. But I saw it too late to warn her, even if such

warning was ever heeded. An American girl of seventeen would have outlived her dream had she been rudely awakened; would have defended herself with her inherent coquetry, would have flirted herself out of love, though possibly shrining in her heart a higher ideal—one that would make her more difficult for a lover to win in the future, because of the lesson learned at the outset. But Stephanie has the mixed French and Indian blood; she is impulsive and passionate, quiet, shy, self-restrained, but absolute in devotion.

"Had I thought sooner of her growing womanhood I think I should have foreseen what must result from propinquity and opportunity. But we wiseacres are always wise in the fulness of what *has* happened. Then when I did see I blundered like an ass. I made stupid efforts to detach Stan from Bouie's Hill, to introduce the set at the fort, to force him to be attentive to women who were his friend's guests. Thus I thought to relegate Stephanie back to childhood. The result was—I taught her the secret of her own heart. Unfortunately, it was soon an open secret to the garrison."

Randall walked the floor, looking from time

to time at Carson, whose expectant face forced the doctor to go on:

"You know something of garrison scandal: its persistent prying, its amplification of facts, its eagerness to scatter its grains broadcast—in short, the potentiality of its littleness. Well, there was a constant undercurrent of talk—a flood that was swelling from bank to bank. I felt as a Hollander might who had tried to assist a poor neighbor by helping him dig his garden, and, digging backwards, had unintentionally cut through the dike. But—to flounder out of my metaphor—I had done the mischief; and, seeing Stephanie's agitation as the heart waked the senses; seeing, too, that the cruelest of critics were on the alert, and hearing gossipping calculations of her chances of failure or success, I grew pitiful of the girl and tried to do what was right and just. I told the story as I knew it to Stan, advising him to send Stephanie to the Misses Minor's school at Mount Hope, in Virginia. You know Mount Hope belongs to Rue. Crippled as Stan is for money, it was, I thought, the best thing to be done. The Misses Minor are ladies, and Stephanie could not have been in kinder or better keeping; so I volun-

teered *that* advice. You need not look it. I know it was stupid, cursedly stupid; I should have known what Stan would do when this open secret of the garrison, with the comments of the gossips, was told him. The next morning after our conversation—which was only one-sided, for *I* talked—he asked me if I would accompany *Miss Castalar* to Memphis to Major Anderson's. Like a blanked idiot I expressed my satisfaction at this move, and added that in a year or two 'Stephanie would better understand her position in his family.' He interrupted me with: 'I shall go for *Miss Castalar* this fall; we are to be married in December.' Then he left me stunned with the surprise of an ending I had *not* contemplated. An hour later I walked over the hill there"—and Randall pointed to where a shaft of white marble gleamed amid the euonymus-trees—"where I found Stan lying senseless upon Mrs. Leszinksky's grave."

CHAPTER V.

"Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender of parents, though to remember be but to lament?"

FOR some minutes after Randall's story was told there was a deep silence in the room. Then they heard from the south piazza a mingling of voices, a child's glad shout, and the tinkle of quick-running little feet.

The door opening into the hall was pushed ajar, and the shining brown face of a half-grown negro boy was thrust forward into the room, as he announced, with an air evidently studied for the occasion:

"Major Dezinksky am approachin' de premises wid his bride. We done seed de 'quipage over dar on top ov de ridge. Miss Rue done gone down to de gate to pursent her 'spects on de kashun; an' Miss Mary an' me thought you mought like to jine us and Kunnel Beall out on de piazzer, whar we'se a-waitin' to make our compli*ments* and *con*gratulations."

Randall laughed, and even Carson's grim face

relaxed into a half-smile as he muttered some adjectives to which "idiot" was finally attached. The two gentlemen followed the self-important and self-appointed usher to the piazza, where Beall and Miss Carson were waiting. The carriage of the travellers was now in full view, coming down the hill on the opposite side of the ravine through which the little creek wound around the base of Bouie's Hill.

As the carriage passed through the gate, which Bob Stearns held open, the driver reined in his horses, and the Indian chief lifted the eager child into the door that was opened by a gentleman, who folded her in a close embrace. Then loosening the little hands that were clasped about his head, he turned her face to the lady who sat by his side, saying:

"Kiss your new mamma, my daughter."

The child drew back with a cold, proud air:

"She is *not* my mamma; she is only *Stephanie*. My mamma is with God. You told me so, papa."

"But, my dear child, because your mother is with God He has sent you another mother; so you will kiss her and let her be your mamma."

The child looked intently into her father's eyes; with a sudden movement she turned and held her scarlet lips for the silent lady's kiss, then as suddenly returned to the shelter of her father's breast, hiding her face as she said:

"Stephanie is not my mamma; but if God wants her to be my mamma, and my own dear mamma wants her, and you want her, why I will call her Mamma Stephanie. But I won't say just 'mamma.' Papa! O papa! I cannot."

The child burst into a storm of sobs that she tried in vain to stifle. An agonized expression came to her father's face. Recollecting that the scene had witnesses, he folded his cloak about her as she clung to him; then, when he could release his solitary arm, he held out his hand to the Indian, whose eyes flashed a glad light as their hands touched. The soldier had advanced to the carriage-door, and there was a fresh hand-shaking. Of course Bob found voice:

"I wish you joy, major, and you too, Mrs. Leszinksky."

After a moment's hesitation, as if uncertain what the etiquette of the occasion required, Stearns ventured to extend his hand to the

lady, who spoke a low "Thank you" as she touched the extended hand with her gloved fingers, which retreated instantly when the Indian reached out his hand to follow the soldier's lead in courtesy. The rejected hand was withdrawn, and the Indian walked back to Pike's house, stopping by the side of the rough log steps, against which he leaned, while a mournful, far-away look gave an unusual and touching expression to the stern, battle-scarred face. With a quick glance, that had in it more of entreaty than reproach, at the lady by his side, Major Leszinksky clasped his arm about his little daughter and sprang from the carriage. He called to the driver:

"Go on, Oscar; I will walk up to the house. You need not wait."

The carriage-door was shut by Stearns, who bowed to its solitary occupant as it moved on. Then with a dramatic shake and nod of his head, which shook out the lengths of tawny curling hair, Stearns turned to the porch of the little cabin, where Pike was answering the kindly greetings of the beloved friend to whom he owed shelter and support.

As Bob came up the steps Major Leszinksky

turned to his little daughter, who was making a brave and successful effort to conquer her sobs.

"Now, Rue, ask your friends here to come up the hill to supper. I know you and Miss Mary have prepared a feast for us all."

"Yes, papa."

The blue-gray eyes flashed through misty tears as the little hands resolutely brushed away the falling drops, while the scarlet lips were set in firm lines which betokened a will that would rule her own spirit, no matter what pain the conquest might cost. With one quick, gasping sigh she continued, the low, clear, sweet voice growing steadier and firmer with each word:

"You must come up to supper, Pike. There is a little table set for you, and Bob, and my chief; and I am to pour your coffee."

She looked at Pike and Bob, who promised. Turning to the Indian, she waited a moment, and then addressed him impatiently:

"You will come, my chief?" The Indian silently shook his head.

Major Leszinksky spoke: "I trust you will come, Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. My little daughter would be greatly disappointed if the friend who

saved her life and gave her back to us should refuse to sit at the table she has prepared."

Rue had caught the chief's hand in hers while her father was speaking. She instinctively connected the chief's refusal with her stepmother, whom she was already inclined to antagonize. In place of the old condition of a protective equality and graciously patronizing sisterhood with Stephanie Castalar, there was about to be forced upon her a new and, to her, incomprehensible relationship—one that disturbed her ideas of proprietorship in her home and her father.

Moreover, the child, young as she was, was jealous for her mother. She perfectly remembered her mother, and knew that she herself had been second to her in the love of the father she worshipped. Had she not lost her mother it is possible she would have grown to be dissatisfied with the second place in the affection of both parents. Now the bitter seed had fallen into a quickening soil. As I have said, she was instantly jealous for her mother and as instantly jealous for herself. It was the beginning of the development of all the qualities of her race—of traits of character that had been dormant in the blood for centuries. From that moment fate rechristened her

with the name her father had playfully given her in her babyhood. The thought of the day he had called her "the young Voyvoda," and of Margaret's half-fearful, half-playful admission of the fitness and significance of the title, came to Major Leszinksky as, with an imperious, insistent manner, she addressed the Indian:

"You will come, my chief! It is my table. Stephanie"—with a glance at her father she corrected this to "Mamma Stephanie is not to be at my table. You will come!"

The words embarrassed all who were present. Rue's clairvoyance in the matter of the Indian and her stepmother enlightened Leszinksky. He remembered a thousand little, hitherto indefinable things in Stephanie Castalar's manner whenever the Indian entered her presence. It was clear to him that she neither forgot nor forgave the actors in that massacre at Castalar's Valley where all of her family were murdered. Without any knowledge of these circumstances, where the Pawnee chief had been an aggressor, Rue had divined her stepmother's antipathy to her friend. The circumstances of her life had developed her perceptive faculty to a wonderful quickness. She

had her first lesson in causation as the chief replied, rather to Leszinksky's thought than to her words:

"The lodge of his friend is shut to Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. The young squaw remembers that four winters ago Lo-loch-to-hoo-la was on the war-path by the Kiamesha. His love for the child he then found in his path, for the Morning Star that beamed on the dark hour of his life, for Leszinksky who has been his friend, was stronger in the heart of the Indian than his hatred of the oppressors who have wronged his people; and so he buried the hatchet and made peace with his enemies. But the Morning Star is with the Great Spirit, and Leszinksky has taken into his lodge the daughter of the half-breed Sioux whom the Pawnees chased, with his white father the thieving Indian trader, from the settlement on the Platte, to find him, after many winters had passed, on the south bank of the Canadian. His lands and cattle were bought with the blood-money for which his father sold the Pawnees to their enemies. The lies of the trader had filled the ears of the Great Father of the white men, and the Pawnees were driven from their lands to starve in the wilderness."

It was the first time Leszinksky had ever heard the Indian refer to the massacre at Castalar's. By an unspoken agreement they had avoided mention of that catastrophe, which Leszinksky had never attributed to personal revenge, but merely to the accidental finding of the settlement on the San Bois by the war-party.

It was Rue's first lesson in the wrongs of the Indian. It enlightened her much more fully than one could easily believe possible at so early an age and to so unripe an understanding. She had held the chief's hand while he was speaking; she pressed it affectionately when he made mention of his love for her, and for her mother. As his story ended she exclaimed impetuously:

"You shall not starve, my chief! You *shall* live with us. You shall eat at my table, I tell you!" And the voice rang loud and firm. "*My* table! I hate the people who were bad to you. I love you next to papa—better than Oscar, or Bob, or Pike. You will come with me, my chief. O my chief! you will always stay with me."

Her voice sank to a quivering moan of entreaty. The Indian caught her in his arms. He could not resist the entreaty of the child of his

love—the child he had found on the war-path and adopted as his own. The fiery eyes softened with the mist of unshed tears.

"Come," said Leszinksky softly, placing his hand on Lo-loch-to-hoo-la's shoulder, and together they went up the path under the leafless trees of the orchard.

BOOK FIRST.

PART SECOND.

HAGAR.

CHAPTER VI.

"The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river."

A LADY walked up and down the wide porch of a large, old-fashioned house built on a high, wooded knoll that overlooked the Hudson. She was a mere girl of nineteen, tall, dark, and stately, with a dignified carriage and a face which evinced a decided character. She was not beautiful, but there was in face and form latent possibility of beauty. She was one of those sallow, slender brunettes who may ripen to a rich perfection or wither to positive ugliness.

It was a warm, breezeless morning of the early summer, and something, either in the lady's mood or in the weather, had deepened the color of the full red lips, and tinged the usually pale cheeks to a faint crimson. Gradually the slow, stately step slackened, and there were long pauses at the end of the porch commanding a view of occasional stretches of the road, upon which a horseman appeared and disappeared until he finally vanished in a turn through the hills.

After a longer pause the lady crossed the porch to an open glass door, through which she entered the library. She stood for a moment beside a table, idly turning the leaves of a book of engravings, then walked slowly about the room with the air of a person unacquainted with the objects it contained. Opposite the door leading into the hall, and at right angles with the window through which she had entered, was a curtained recess.

Pulling aside the heavy drapery, she found a door, fastened with a bolt which she pushed back, only to find that the door still resisted opening. Smilingly she murmured, "Bluebeard's closet!" and then tried a door oppo-

site the window. It opened into a billiard-room, which also had a curtained recess, the counterpart in position and fastenings of the one in the library.

"They evidently open into the same apartment," she thought. A certain pleasurable curiosity made her forgetful of her previous preoccupation.

She rang the bell and told the servant who answered it to send her maid with the keys of the house. With her maid, a bright, intelligent mulatto, came the housekeeper, who asked, with a slight appearance of embarrassment: "What keys are wanted, madame?"

"All the keys. I wish to see the house."

The housekeeper left the room. The maid, with the respectfully familiar air of the Virginian servant born to service and "brought up with the family" (to use their own definition of position), walked to where her mistress was seated, and, while rearranging the heavy bands of hair that shaded the temples, said:

"I tell you this's a mighty funny sort o' place, Mis' Kate; mighty queer folks 'bout this house. I didn't say nothin' 'bout it this mornin', 'cause Marse Capin was likely to come in

any minute, but I certainly did see a ghost las' night."

"Nonsense, Rose! A woman of your age has surely outgrown such childish folly. You'll be trying *obi* charms next, if such notions get into that stupid head of yours. I thought you knew better."

"Heap wiser folks than me, Mis' Kate, believes in ghosts, and them *obi* conjurers—it don't do no good to get thar ill-will; but I ain't skeered of 'em like some o' our fool plantation hands is. But, Mis' Kate, for sho' I did see in the hall out thar somebody all in black when I come down from your room after you was gone to bed las' night."

"It might have been one of the maids or the housekeeper. Besides, who ever heard of a ghost in black?"

"No, Mis' Kate. 'Twahn't none of them. They was all over thar in thar rooms over the kitchen when I got thar. I run so fast and so hard I stumbled as I turn in that passage, and the housekeeper she come out and asked 'what was the matter, and if I couldn't find my way to my room.' I didn't say nothin', I was so upsot, and she called to the girls

to open thar door and show me the way to my room."

"Then it was a shadow—possibly your own."

"No, Mis' Kate, 'twahn't no shadder; leastways 'twahn't mine. If it was a shadder it was might'ly like somebody I used to see—somebody with thar back hair tucked up like yourn, and little soft curls put back so."

And she smoothed her mistress' bands to indicate the manner in which the curls were caught back from the face.

"Well, whom did the curly-headed woman resemble?"

"Lucy. You don't 'member Lucy, Mis' Kate. She belonged to Mis' Margaret Cart'ret, and she went with her out to the Injun country. She was 'most white—white as some white folks, whiter 'an most poor white folks. An' she had long brown curls, on'y she didn't we'r 'em put up like she had 'em last night."

"But a ghost wouldn't change the fashion of its curls; so you see you are a little old goose." And the mistress smiled at the maid.

"Well, if 'twahn't a ghost, Mis' Kate, it certainly was Lucy. I hearn that Mis' Margaret sold her. She must a-done something mighty bad or

Mis' Margaret never would a-sold her. I know thar was some old story about Mis' Margaret a-findin' her in a graveyard, where her mammy was lying dead on the grave of the biggest gambler ever was in Richmond. I 'member when he was killed; that was 'fore you was born, Mis' Kate. Capin Coleman shot him down on Main Street—shot him just like he was a mad dog; an' folks say he was Lucy's father. But thar was whar Mis' Margaret found Lucy, in the graveyard, and old Marse Tom Cart'ret bought her fur Mis' Margaret—bought her right outen a graveyard."

And she ended her story with a low, gurgling laugh that stopped abruptly as the gaunt, stern-faced housekeeper returned with the keys.

"Open that door," said the lady, pointing to the curtained recess.

"Captain Hartley has the keys of that room," the housekeeper answered; then added, as the lady hesitated to follow her through the door of the hall that she held open: "I have nothing to do with the rooms on that side of the house. They are Captain Hartley's private rooms. They are closed when he is away, and when he is here his man attends to them."

"Very well; you can unlock all of the other rooms and open the blinds. Every room will be needed next week; the house will then be full of guests. If my husband prefers to use these rooms we will take them; if not they can be put in order for other use."

She haughtily nodded dismissal to the housekeeper, who left the room, and sank back into the easy-chair.

Another low gurgle of laughter from the mulatto, who soon found breath to say:

"That white woman thinks she's mistis of this place yit; that's what comes of havin' poor white folks 'roun. If you wants that key, Mis' Kate, I know whar to get it."

"Then get it at once," said Mrs. Hartley.

The imperious tone of the first syllable told the intelligent servant more truly than the words that this mood required silent obedience. The affectionately familiar air instantly changed to respectful attention.

"Yes, Mis' Kate."

She was gone but a few moments, and returned with a bunch of keys.

A look from her mistress instructed her. The keys were hastily tried and the door was opened.

Rose entered the room and threw back the shutters and an outer door from which a short flight of steps led under and through a vine-covered arbor. The paved walk and leafy trellis ended at a small gate opening into a shrubbery of forest and fruit trees.

Mrs. Hartley, who had held the curtains aside while Rose fitted the key, let them fall together as she closed the door of the library behind her and entered the room, which was altogether different in character from any she had yet seen in the house.

The windows were Norman arches of stained glass, the doors and wood-work of heavy oak. The panelled, gray-painted walls were hung with engravings surmounted with curious bits of armor, glistening arms, and trophies of the chase. The polished oaken floor was partly covered with rugs of Eastern make and beautifully-preserved skins from which the raised heads of the animals seemed on watch for intruders.

The young wife forgot in her delight the late jar to her dignity, which had been given more by the housekeeper's manner than by her words. The words were civilly spoken, but something in the speaker's face had implied a higher authority

in the house than this newly-arrived mistress. The offence was one the imperious lady would neither overlook nor forgive; but for the moment it was forgotten, and Rose, magnetically conscious of the change in her mistress's mood, again resumed the easy manner of an affectionate and favorite servant.

"O Rose! this is the most beautiful room I ever saw."

"It is pretty, Mis' Kate; but I think Marse Capin might a-bought a whole carpet. If the room had one of them fine velvet ones like we got at home it would a-been a sight prettier."

"Rose, you simpleton, there is not a room at Belleview or at the Cedars that can compare with this."

"No, Mis' Kate, thar ain't at the Cedars. You see marster won't fix that up till Mis' Margaret's little girl is growed up—that is, if she lives; if she don't live, then Marse Tom comes in, and 'twouldn't be no use fubbishin' it up unless he got married. It's good 'nuff now for all the hunters and the dogs in the county to crowd in. But marster's new parlors, which he fixed up when he married Marse Capin's sister, is heap finer 'an this."

Her smiling mistress was walking from engraving to engraving when Rose stopped her speech to try still another door. It opened into the room adjoining the billiard-room, and completed the square of the one-storied wing.

Mrs. Hartley had not missed her loquacious maid until a sudden exclamation caused her to turn to the door of the newly-opened room, now flooded with light, where Rose was standing beside a portfolio which had fallen from an easel she struck in opening the window. From its scattered contents of engravings and sketches she had picked out the one piece of bright color, and was standing in open-mouthed wonder gazing at a large oil-painting that had evidently been cut from its frame and rudely folded to fit in the portfolio.

As Mrs. Hartley crossed the threshold Rose turned. In a thrilling tone of fright and amazement she said:

"It's her, Mis' Kate—it's the ghost!"

"What ghost?"

"The one I tole you 'bout—the woman I saw in the hall las' night that looked like Mis' Margaret's Lucy. If she's dead"—and there was the tremor of a positive terror in her voice—

"'twas her ghost a-lookin' for somebody—this here chiles, may be. If she an't dead, then she's a livin' here; fur this's her picture, Mis' Kate." And she held up the canvas for her mistress to see it.

The subject of the picture was the hackneyed one of "Hagar in the Desert," but it had not been treated in the usual conventional manner nor in strict accordance with sacred history.

Beneath a group of feathery date-palms in the centre of a green oasis a spring had burst out of a rocky little depression and was winding through a leafy channel to the sands. Prostrate beside it the beautiful Egyptian was dipping up the sparkling drops with one hand while the other clutched the fold of a scarlet mantle upon which was lying her fainting child. The artist had selected the moment when the exhausted mother gains the life-saving shelter of the palms—her last effort expended in that supreme struggle of motherhood with the burning sands and the fiery sun.

There were grave faults in the painting—a critic could have found them by the dozen—but there was also revealed in it the soul of a great artist. It was so finely spiritual in meaning that

a sensualist would have turned from it in dismay. It was not a temptation, but a reproach to passion. The ragged little sandals, the bleeding feet, the wasted arms, the shadows on the face half veiled by the heavy masses of the fallen hair, were all parts of her story, pitifully accented by the mournful look in the soft brown eyes and the unforgetting tenderness with which she clung to the folds of the mantle about her child.

It had a wonderful effect upon the proud woman, who instinctively knew she was looking on the face of a rival.

Through the fierce anger which flashed quick and hot in every quivering nerve of the indignant wife when Rose clothed the ghost in flesh and found its pictured semblance in the bedchamber of her husband, she felt a contemptuous pity for this faded Hagar.

But the child? She restlessly moved from point to point of view to see if the light would not somewhere penetrate the tangle of waving hair and let her see clearly the features of the hidden face.

She was jealous of the child!

It was the rival of the life that had just begun to beat beneath her own heart. She knew she

need not say, "Cast out this bondwoman." The sad, fearful eyes of the pictured face said that all loss had befallen that mother except loss of her child, and the clinging hold of the scarlet mantle told of an agony of apprehension lest that loss also should come.

There is a prescience of the heart! It was that which taught the inexperienced wife the story dimly outlined in the pictured face of the Hagar, and it was a story which affected her own life. Her brother had opposed her marriage. She knew from his words of warning—words she had only imperfectly understood—that there were histories in the past of her husband unfit for her knowledge. Her father had not cordially approved of his wife's brother as a suitor for his daughter, but his daughter's avowal of her preference and his wife's entreaties had won his reluctant consent. His doubts were met and hushed with those pleas which the world is so willing to make for the reformed profligate.

But now the young wife was face to face with an episode in her husband's life that was not altogether buried out of sight in the buried past. She did not doubt for an instant the identity of Rose's ghost. The Hagar of the picture was in

the house to which her husband had brought her. There had already been, in her short married life, moments of more than half-awakening from the glamour of her love-dream—moments of torture from the vague imaginings, the unrest, that precedes distrust. The yielding courtesy, the deferential admiration of the lover, were already things of the past. The husband of six months had either forgotten or was recklessly careless of the methods by which he had won her. The stately gallantry, the finished manner, with which the man of mature age had charmed her out of the circle of her youth was an investiture of ceremony donned with holiday attire, but now rarely on show in the narrowed circle of their home life.

There was already a melodramatic tone in this marriage duo—a prophecy of tragedy in the silence of certain chords. It lacked the shading of the playful badinage, of the sentimental babble, that mocks the wisdom of man by winning the wisest to the delight of Love's wise folly.

In the crisis of sensation which this discovery of the picture precipitated came the bitter knowledge of good and evil. It was something more than the ordinary divestiture of romance—some-

thing different from that loss of the ideal in its fusion with the real which is the varied but constantly recurring experience of marriage. It was not the mere uncovering of the feet of clay, the flaw in the divinity of the god, but the proof that the idol was brutally and sensually human. It was a profound calamity, for it extinguished the sacred fire on the altar of marriage; it was infinitely sorrowful, for it struck at the existence of an infinite love; it was the end of faith, of reverence.

The young wife had begun to learn the lesson which, in its last letters, spells love's death-warrant. Its phrases were the varied moods of the egoist—indifference, complacence, passion, carping criticism, and, most grievous of all to a young, proud, loving nature, sneering silence.

Face to face with the portrait to which Rose had given name and meaning, Mrs. Hartley felt it to be a premeditated insult. All the lesser wrongs to her love crowded about her as witnesses against her husband. No excusing thought suggested that accident or carelessness had left here a forgotten picture. To her it was simply the portrait of a woman whose presence in the house was an outrage; of a child

whose existence was a bar to the happiness of motherhood. She was too young, too inexperienced more than dimly to understand this new future which had fallen like a pall over the dead-born future of her girlish dreams. She did not yet understand that when trust is impossible and loyalty dies of shuddering repulsion the end has come. She did not know that this freshly-turned page in her life was only a new reading of an every-day story.

An over-indulged, motherless girl had followed her fancy—or, to speak more truly, had followed a skilfully hidden leading of fancy—into the outspread net of a sensualist. Yet she was not altogether his victim, but partly the victim of that vague longing of the springtime, that tumult of the senses which flows from the heart of nature through all sentient things, that "need of love" which is essentially human.

A wise mother would have shielded her daughter from the enemy who found aids in her innocence and purity; would have taught her to distinguish the difference between the leading and the illumination of the senses. Such a priestess, if she has listened understandingly to the celestial harmonies, is a divinely-inspired teacher.

She has learned that the soul of marriage is truth, which is love, and that without love marriage is the mere coupling of two galley-slaves; yet, that if truth be wounded through the falsehood of one, a martyr may win heavenward by carrying the burden of a festering corpse.

Before the morning stars sang together, souls, for whom the world was made, were fashioned for each other — male and female created He them. When we understand what is meant by this unequal halving of human souls we shall be wise as gods. For this is the hidden mystery of the ages, the secret imprisoned in the sphinx, where the soul of the woman has partially escaped the bondage of the animal, and with brooding eyes watches for the coming of the deliverer who is to lift her to companionship with the immortals. This is the riddle of old Egypt, entombed in stone, which has puzzled, which still puzzles, philosopher and theologian, which has baffled the poet, the accredited interpreter of the gods.

CHAPTER VII.

"By a bridge I cannot see
Comes that far-off memory."

WHILE holding the canvas for Mrs. Hartley to see the painting, Rose had again, and with more minute circumstance, related the story of Lucy.

The child in the picture had touched a fresh key in Rose's memories of the past, and these memories were daggers of certainty in the mind of her mistress.

"Yes, she did have a child; 'twas 'bout that Mis' Margaret sold her. You see, Mis' Kate, Lucy was a quarteroon, but the child was white; an' its father bought 'em both an' carried 'em 'way off north somewhere. I wonder whar this picture of her come from, anyway?"

Something which she saw just then in the face of her mistress enlightened her. With that instinctive accordance with the mood of her mistress that I have already mentioned as a quality in the African blood, she stopped in the very

flood of speech and waited, still silently holding the extended canvas.

"There, Rose, you can fold up the painting. Did you find it in the portfolio?"

"Yes, Mis' Kate. It busted out o' this side-pocket here when I picked the things up."

"Very well, put it back again where you found it. You see you dreamed the ghost; an *obi* witch always dreams of what she will see next day." There was a proud, smiling scorn in Mrs. Hartley's face, yet under that mask Rose saw a point of interrogation.

"I did see Lucy las' night, Mis' Kate. I didn't dream it, an' I ain't no witch nuther. If I 'ad a-seen her when I was a-dreamin' she'd a-looked just 'zactly like she did when she used to be at ole Marse Tom Cart'ret's. But she didn't. I didn't rightways know her jus' at first, but I thought she was mightily like somebody I seen long ago. I reckon that was what skeered me into thinking 'twas a ghost. She's a heap paler 'an she used to be"—here there was a half-apologetic glance as she went on, "an' a heap more like a lady than a quarteroon"—then a short silence; but seeing no change in the proud face still turned to the pic-

ture, Rose continued: "May be Lucy's livin' somewhar 'bout here, an' she might a-came to see the housekeeper las' night. That stuck-up rascal o' Marse Capin's might a-let her in. The do' of the libr'y was open, an' the light shined on her face out the do' so I could see her plain—'most as plain as I sees you, Mis' Kate. Not rightways a-knowin' at first jus' who she was, but seein' her look like somebody I couldn't jus' make out who, was what struck me all a-heap so 'bout her bein' a ghost."

Mrs. Hartley went into the next room again and examined more closely the engravings and sketches upon the walls, but found no hint of the Hagar—"Nothing! unless it is this lovely miniature painted on ivory—this angelic child's face with the violet eyes and the dusky, auburn hair. The hair, in its flowing ripples of wavy bronze, resembles the tangle of soft, loose curls which hid the child's face in that picture of Hagar—this is the face that was hidden in that picture! Hagar may be deposed, forgotten, but the child has kept a place in the house of her father."

Mrs. Hartley turned from the miniature, trying to fix in her thought a half-recollection, a

fleeting, puzzling impression, the meaning of something to which she had once refused to listen.

What was it her brother had tried to tell her? Was it some story of the garrison life of her husband? a mention of her cousin Margaret—something the Leszinkskys had said or known? some story of a beautiful slave?

Presently, in a dim way, she remembered Lucy.

Memory had unrolled the panorama of life backward and found the figures left in the past—in the lost fairy-land of childhood. They came slowly, like visions in a dream—her beautiful cousin and her cousin's pretty slave. Slowly, slowly came the stately, blue-eyed lady, and the slender, lithe attendant with the long brown curls, the soft brown eyes, the shapely little hands, and the delicate feet—the quadroon with the creamy color of a freshly-opened magnolia-bud.

Again Mrs. Hartley turned to the miniature to study the features, the expression; to see clearly the likeness that had attracted and riveted her attention—the likeness to her husband complexly mingled with another likeness.

Rose had followed her mistress after rearranging the contents of the fallen portfolio and reclosing the windows in the bed-room where she had stumbled into what she felt was an astounding discovery. Full of its importance to her mistress, and by consequence to herself, yet with instinctive and ready apprehension of her mistress's desire to be alone, she had gone out under the vine-covered arbor, and, seated on the lower step of the open door, awaited silently some expression of will from her silent lady.

"Rose!" The tone was impatient and imperative.

"Yes, Mis' Kate," and the mulatto was instantly on her feet.

"Did you ask the housekeeper for those keys you brought?"

"No, Mis' Kate, 'cause she didn't know nothin' about 'em. When I picked up Marse Capin's coat this mornin'—the travellin'-coat he had on yestedday—a bunch o' keys jingled in the pocket. So when the housekeeper said he allus kept his own keys I was sho' the ones in the pocket was the ones you wanted."

"Did she know you had them? Do any of the servants know we are here?"

"No, Mis' Kate, none of 'em. That rascal of Marse Capin's lef' the place this mornin' at daylight, and the maids is up-stairs a-helpin' the housekeeper with all them rooms as was locked up. She's a-gettin' out the linen an' a-uncoverin' the things, an' they's a-sweepin' an' a-fixin' an' a-dustin' fur you to see. She didn't know nuthin' 'bout what I went to yo' rooms after. I did think, when I met her up in the passage, I'd show them keys to her jus' to pay her fur her imperence 'bout Marse Capin allus a-keepin' the keys of his private rooms; but then she asked me, mighty polite-like, 'to please get you to wait, Mis' Kate, and not to see the rooms up-stairs till they was in order, fur she hadn't had a minute sooner to 'range 'em, 'cause she didn't know till yestedday mornin' you had got back to dis country and was a-comin' here las' night. An' she had been busy all day yestedday gettin' your rooms ready—the rooms Marse Capin had writ from Englan' to have ready.'"

"You are sure she did not see the keys?"

"No, Mis' Kate, I'm sho' she don't know I found the keys." And Rose, who had kept them in her hand after locking the bed-room

door, held them up to show her mistress. "She couldn't see 'em, fur they was in my pocket; she was a-fixin' things gen'ally, and not studyin' 'bout me. She thinks you'se in the libr'y, Mis' Kate, and she won't come thar if you don't ring."

"Fasten the windows and then lock up the rooms. Put the keys where you got them. You should not have taken them."

The maid looked wonderingly after her mistress; she had never before been rebuked for obedience to the least caprice, the slightest expression of a wish of the proud and wilful lady who was walking rapidly down through the vine-covered arbor, and who stopped to open the latticed gate as Rose closed the windows and doors and went into the library. The mulatto locked the door behind her, put the keys into her pocket, drew the curtains together that hid the door, and, stooping to arrange a refractory fold, found it caught in a broken link of the chain of a small leather satchel or portemonnaie. She walked with it to the window. As she opened it and leisurely examined the contents her reflections shaped themselves into words:

"I am a-findin' things fur sho'. Fust place, Lucy, what I ain't seen befo' since Mis' Margaret Cart'ret got married. Then them keys. Then that picture o' Lucy, what upsot Mis' Kate worse 'an that rascal of Marse Capin's upsot me this morn' when he tole me I had done seen the spirit of Marse Capin's aunt, what walked constant in this part of the house. Now I know that rascal was jus' a-lyin' like he allus does, an' I am glad I didn't tell him who I thought the ghost look like. He thinks I dun know nothin' 'bout Lucy, an' that I ain't found out that Marse Capin's jus' as big a rascal as he is. Two of the devil's servants in this house, an' bofe of 'em sot agin me and Mis' Kate. No use of Mis' Kate tryin' to do nothin'. She just got to put up with that head devil, 'cep Marse Tom finds out the way he do. But Mis' Kate she's too proud to tell what a mess she's made of marryin', an' I dun know what to do with this here thing now I'se found it. I know it must a-been Lucy's, an' I don't want to leave it here for them rascals to get it, or may be some of the servants as would keep it; an' I don't know whar to find Lucy; an' I can't give it to Mis' Kate—she might tell me like she did 'bout the keys. But, gracious

Marster in heaven! yonder is Mis' Kate bare-headed in the sun; she's whiter 'an a sheet. I know what that means. It means the Cart'ret blood is up for sho'."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds."

THE shadows were lengthening and deepening in Broadway. The red sun, sinking into a bed of purple and gold, set all the windows of the city aflame as the slanting yellow rays caught new color from the rosy clouds and the tinted air. It was the hour and the light which give grace and tenderness to architecture; which brings into a softened relief every fluted column, every tapering spire, all the beauty of pointed mansards and curving arches. It is the fairy hour of transformation, that works a magic spell in giving to sight the beautiful in cities—the hour which curtains with its own loveliness the ugliness and uniform deformity of the brown blocks and solid squares. It is not so true as the dawn. It does not lift the sharp outlines heavenward to meet the coming light, but it gives to the crowded haunts of men the charm that moonlight gives

the shadowy glade. It is not the hour of the sun-worshipper, but of the earth-lover. The early morning, the uprising sun, brings to man the sense of a freshening of being, of the coming of a divinity; the evening curtains space and shuts him in the mystic twilight with magnified shadows.

. . . . . .

A carriage stopped at the private entrance of the New York Hotel. It had two occupants—Mrs. Hartley and her maid. The lady threw open the door, sprang to the sidewalk, and was in the hallway questioning a clerk before Rose had gathered together her parcels.

"Is Judge Cartaret here?"

"Yes, madam; he arrived this morning with Mrs. Cartaret. I think the judge drove out this afternoon with a friend who called for him, but I will send to see if Mrs. Cartaret is in."

"No, do not send. Can you give me rooms for myself and maid without delay? I wish to go to my room immediately. When Judge Cartaret returns let me know at once."

The clerk hesitated an instant, then with a quick, judicial glance at the proud, cold face of his interlocutor and another at the respectable

Rose, who entered with her collected parcels, followed by a porter with the luggage, which he saw was marked "Cartaret," he grew smilingly suave and acquiescent.

"Certainly, madam. We have a very comfortable, cool corner suite on the third floor immediately above Judge Cartaret's. I will get the keys and send up the luggage. I will speak to Judge Cartaret the moment he returns. Who shall I say wishes to see him?"

"His daughter."

As he left to get the keys Rose said in a sepulchral tone, as if half in fear of speech and half afraid of what she was about to say: "I think, Mis' Kate, Marse Capin's here. I saw that rascal o' his'n stop that driver that brung us from the railroad jus' now at the corner thar. He thought I'd done come in, but I hadn't; I was a-pickin' up this shawl I had let drop."

"Very well. It does not matter."

The proud face was unruffled and the stately step was slow and deliberate as they crossed the hall and followed the carrier of the keys up the stairs.

A few moments later a small, slender, dark-visaged man (the personage Rose designates as

"that rascal of Marse Capin's") knocked at the door of a room on the second floor immediately beneath Mrs. Hartley's.

"Come in," in a sharp, rasping tone. The man opened the door, but did not enter. The same voice called more peremptorily, "What is it, Marten?"

"I wish to speak with you a minute, sir."

"Then come in and shut the door."

The man obeyed, and stood waiting, looking with ill-concealed embarrassment from his master to a lady who, seated in a low easy-chair, was fanning herself violently. It would have been evident to a less acute perception than that of the saturnine Leperello that he had interrupted a stormy discussion. His master gave him little time for observation or reflection.

"What is so important that you come to my sister's room to find me?"

There was a moment longer of silence.

"What is it, I say? Are you dumb?"

"I have something to tell you, sir."

"Well, tell it. If you are such an idiot that you came here for a mere nothing, leave the room at once."

"I did not think, sir"—he glanced hesitat-

ingly at the lady—"I thought possibly you would come, sir"—a half-muttered oath interrupted him, but Captain Hartley controlled his temper sufficiently to leave that sentence unfinished, and added:

"If it is the Oakhill affair tell all you know. My sister has heard of this idiotic blunder of the housekeeper's in letting Lucy stay there."

"Mrs. Hartley is here, sir—in the hotel—her maid is with her. They came on the train that leaves Yonkers at five o'clock. She is registered 'Miss Cartaret,' and a message is written at the office for her father to come to her as soon as he returns."

"What room has she?" The question came through half-shut lips that were white with anger.

"The one immediately over this, sir."

Captain Hartley started toward the door, when his sister sprang up and caught his arm, saying to Marten, in a tone which exacted and received instant obedience: "Go into the hall and close the door. Do not let any one come in, but wait there until you are called." When the door closed she turned to her brother, letting go his arm as she said:

"You are about to do a very foolish thing.

Kate is justly incensed at the presence of that woman and her child at Oakhill. No doubt the poor girl thinks she has found the cause of your indifference to her, your brutality; you need not frown or sneer at me. I have neither respect for you nor fear of you. I know you too thoroughly— "

He interrupted her with "We know each other too thoroughly."

"No, you are not so wise as you think; there is in my composition a little leaven of honesty, of feeling, utterly lacking in you, that at times forces me to side with the right. True, I helped you win Kate. I used my influence with her father and gained his reluctant consent to your marriage. Utterly false as I knew you to be, you succeeded in deceiving me into the belief that you loved her. But for that I would have refused. Yes, you may smile at my stupidity. I deserve even your contempt for believing an unscrupulous sensualist could love a pure and honorable woman."

"Forgive me, madam, that I have heretofore underrated your sense of honor, your very disinterested affection for your stepdaughter, your devotion to your husband."

Tone and words had the effect intended. He put his sister in a rage and on the defensive, and thus won double advantage in the quarrel he forced. From this moment he kept his temper while inflaming hers. He skilfully avoided recrimination or discussion of himself by adroit assent to her charges, and still more adroit questioning, which goaded her into a fury that finally quelled anger by its very vehemence. Then with seeming frankness—the man was a born actor and only through perverseness or carelessness ever forgot his rôle—he laughed aloud as the storm stilled, caught and kissed his sister's hands, exclaiming:

"A truce, a truce, sister! and I will promise to sign any articles of agreement you present. Make your own terms. You commenced by warning me against a folly. Now I am quite ready to be wise or to profit by your wisdom. What shall I do, what shall I say, and to whom and how shall I say it?"

In the beginning of the conversation Mrs. Cartaret had drawn her brother away from the door, distrusting what she knew of the keen sense of hearing possessed by the ubiquitous Marten. Thus it happened they were near an open win-

dow, directly under another upon which a tearful, hot face was lying hidden in slender hands.

The noise of Broadway, in silencing all lesser sound, left the young wife free to sob out her grief in the profound isolation of that constant roar which helps to make the loneliness of cities. She had fled to Sanctuary and found it in this solitary room, from which she had barred out even the faithful Rose. A lull in the stream in the street, a pause in the tide, whose evening flood was about to ebb, let the voices come upward from the window beneath Mrs. Hartley's. At the first sound she started, and then let her head droop again on the folded hands until her husband's laugh struck her like a blow. She sprang to her feet and tremblingly closed the window as if shutting out an actual and evil presence; then, throwing herself upon the bed, sobbed herself to sleep as would a tired and grieved child.

An hour later a steady knocking at the door awakened her. A voice she knew was her stepmother's was calling, "Kate! Kate! I wish to see you. I must speak with you at once."

She tried to resist this assault, to defend her solitude by silence; but the continued knocking

and the varied tones of entreaty and persuasion compelled consent. She bathed her flushed and tear-stained face and opened the door.

At the outposts Mrs. Cartaret had an easy victory; for a moment after her entrance the girl was lying unresistant in her arms, telling in gasping, broken sobs the story of her sorrows. She had no distrust of her stepmother—she was too loyal, too true to doubt her father's wife. Mrs. Cartaret had been uniformly kind; careless but complaisant. She had not interfered with the expressed or implied wishes of either of Judge Cartaret's children, except as a playful and gracious ally when their father's indulgence was difficult to win. Kate had not seen how entirely she was led by her stepmother in her marriage. In fact, Mrs. Cartaret had rather earnestly warned the girl against her brother as a suitor, but, curiously enough, the warning had served to strengthen a wavering fancy. Her stepmother had urged: "My brother is so much your senior, the match is so unequal; in fact, I am rather astonished at this absorbing passion of his. I had fancied he was past the glamour of maidens' glances. I thought he had lost his illusions, was a disenchanted, world-weary man,

who would finish his life as he had lived its morning—alone. I did not think he would set his all upon the desperate chance of winning you."

And then the soft hands caressingly smoothed the girl's dusky locks, and rich, full lips kissed her and called her "sister." Thus the faith of womanhood was belied by half lies and perverted truths, by falsehood which was cowardly and cruel. For this was a wanton wrecking of the divine in woman by the treason of woman—a denial of sex, a wilful perversion of the faith enshrined in the ark of motherhood.

To go back to the beginning of the last paragraph. The outposts were taken, but there Mrs. Cartaret's victory rested. She had captured confidence, but she could not dislodge the forces which had taken the fortress. The false Love who had blindfolded the girl's fancy had loosed his bandage and deserted. Contempt and hatred had followed violence and brutality, and crept into the empty citadel. Mrs. Cartaret's persuasive words fell fruitless of result when she pleaded for forgiveness and reconciliation.

The girl had borne her minor trials nobly. She had offered neither reproach nor resistance

to tyranny and scorn. She had never even thought of reprisal. She had accepted the unhappiness of her new life as an unexpected accident of marriage, as something painful for which she could not blame herself, nor yet altogether any one else. Unconsciously she had blasphemed both love and marriage by generalizing her wretchedness. Her innocence and inexperience aided in her self-deception. She confounded Eros with Anteros, and saw only a deity of the nether world.

Mrs. Hartley was not merely angry with her husband. The pity of it was that she was not angry with him; for had she loved him truly she would have been angry at Love's defection. But now for her husband she had only contempt, while the knowledge of Love's lesion which had come to her made her almost loathe herself.

The last refuge of self-respect was contempt for the man who had led her into this cave of horrors. Then, as she saw no visible outlet in the future, no way of escape without dragging her pride through the dirt of public scandal, to contempt was added hatred.

Late that night Mrs. Cartaret left her bro-

ther's wife. The self-appointed ambassadress had failed except in two points: on certain conditions the young wife would return to Oakhill. This was a concession to opposite influences—to fear of the world and to affection. Kate had been brought up to reverence conventionalities. She had given a very sincere friendship and affection to her father's wife. Her father's wife was her husband's sister. The doubled influence won a truce.

CHAPTER IX.

"Never on this side of the grave again,
On this side of the river,
On this side of the garner of the grain,
Never!"

THERE were guests at Oakhill through the entire summer and fall—relatives or friends of the Cartarets, mostly Virginians, but there was a leaven of the extreme South. An occasional creole from New Orleans or Mobile —three or four of those exceptionally beautiful women, those exquisite flowers of race and climate, those wonderful Latin and Saxon hybrids—but, pshaw! I shall not try to do in pen and ink roughly the portraits that Cable has painted. But there were others, unique specimens, that as yet Cable has not—hybrids of curious quality, where strength and endurance mingle with strength and fire; Carolinians, compounds of French Huguenots and Scotch Highlanders; Kentuckians, enlarged by the boiling fusion of Saxon and Celt; Georgians

that have brought a queer tinge of Oglethorpe's queer colony into their latest graftings.

The marriage of Judge Cartaret's daughter to Captain Hartley, the New York millionaire (in 1850 a millionaire was a more infrequent coruscation in society than a tripled sextuple millionaire is in the reign of King Arthur), was an event that had gathered together the Southern clans. Those old slave holding Virginian Lords Paramount, that untitled peerage whose oral history was as real as if it had been chronicled in Debrett, were at Bellevue in full force at the time of the wedding; and they were now well represented at Oakhill, to give the bride a welcome back from her wedding journey in Europe. The Cartarets dated from the earliest colonial days—from the period when a few powerful families divided the State into districts which were mere appanages of a strong aristocracy. They were connected, through the intermarriages of over a century, with nearly all of the principal families.

Leadership in the State during her semi-feudal system was almost a thing of heritage. Certain families had a tacitly recognized supremacy in the direction of public affairs and a very pro-

nounced influence in society. They were the despots of political conventions, almost the arbiters of law and thought. They formed an oligarchy which was also an autocracy. To belong to it was a privilege of caste, not a reward of merit. The self-made man who forced himself into their number had an involuntary and instinctive feeling that he was there only upon sufferance. In fact, he not only fought his way thither, but he was forced to wage a continual conflict to keep the position he had conquered.

It was this state of society with its arrogant rule, this democratic aristocracy built upon a corner-stone of slavery, where rank was marked by the number of negroes and the breadth of acres, that sent the Jacksons to Tennessee and drove Henry Clay to Kentucky. The son of a petty farmer, the near relative of a recusant Baptist preacher, could not rise in the Old Dominion to a plane of equality with politicians who plumed themselves upon their Jeffersonian principles. Yet (strange contradiction!) these same dominative, aggressive, self-assertive insolents, who presumed upon a few prosperous decades, were the same big-hearted, free-handed

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democrats who gave the vast extent of the Northwest to the general government on the one condition that it should be free territory! Some of these Virginians had higher patents of nobility, better title to consideration, to respect, than numerous slaves and broad acres. Notable among such stood the Cartarets. First, they were a historic race. (I wish here to enter my protest against that sham sentiment of a false republicanism which discredits the honorable records of a brave and honest family. It is a puerility to undervalue blood in the human animal when we know that in daily transactions where other animals are on sale it has a high-priced and very marketable value. Because thousands of mushrooms have upsprung in a land first parched by war and then watered by prosperity I do not choose to join the common crowd in its genuflections before the mushrooms. I hate the snobbery that turns its back upon its obligations to principles and qualities long incarnate in some proudly honest or honorable family, to bend before the loutish possessor of the filthy gatherings of greed.)

The Cartarets were part and parcel of the history of England. They had served in field and

cabinet. They had carried an unstained name through centuries of trial. One of their noblest representatives fought with Prince Rupert, and afterwards lost life and lands in an unsuccessful effort to save King Charles the First. His oldest son shared the ill-fortunes of Charles the Second, but immediately after the Restoration retired from court to repair his fortune by close economy and diligent care of his impoverished estate. The second son, Thomas Cartaret, the first of a succession of Thomas Cartarets which lasted through a century and a half in Virginia, had run away to the plantations with the daughter of one of the most bitter haters of the "Cavaliers" in that body of bitter haters — the Long Parliament. A large grant of land from Charles the Second, just after the Restoration, established the first Virginian Cartaret as a magnate in the land. Adherents of the Stuarts, the Cartarets detested the house of Hanover and were ready to take arms when the cry of revolt raised by Massachusetts reached Virginia. The day after Cornwallis's surrender they returned to their plantations on the James River, where they led the quietly useful lives of country gentlemen, diversified by occasional winters

in Richmond and Washington. Judge Cartaret was the first barrister and jurist in the family. His first wife, the mother of Mrs. Hartley, was a New Orleans creole of Spanish extraction; the second was a beautiful and childless widow, the Mrs. Cartaret I have already presented to you. She met the handsome, wealthy Southerner in New York in January of 1844, and married him in the following March. At the time of Judge Cartaret's marriage to Mrs. Hilton, Captain Hartley was in the army. But in the April after his sister's marriage he resigned, having inherited a great-uncle's estate. It was a fortune of which the Hartleys had despaired. But a sudden and terrible loss, and change of humor in a petulant old man, disappointed expectant heirs and brought to the Hartleys that unexpected which is so constantly happening.

We now return to the point at which this chapter began. Captain Hartley was absent from Oakhill during the summer and early fall. "There were unsettled affairs of his inheritance that had suffered during his absence in Europe." That was the explanation given to Judge Cartaret, whom he met at the New York Hotel, on the morning after the events described in the last

chapter, when the judge returned from a night's visit to a friend on Long Island.

Another explanation was volunteered: "My sister and Kate left for Oakhill this morning. It is so hot in town that I begged them not to wait to see me off. I go immediately West—possibly as far as Santa Fé. There are some matters that I can arrange more readily than any agent I could send to New Mexico. Of course it is a disagreeable thing to have to go just as we expect the friends who promised to visit us on our return. But I trusted to your kindness. I hope you and my sister will stay with Kate. I beg of you to act as host in my absence. Of course I shall return as soon as I can get through with these troublesome details." The explanation was accepted in good faith by the unsuspicious gentleman to whom it was made. A slight uneasiness excited by his daughter's changed appearance was just as easily explained away by his wife: "Kate is looking badly—of course we must expect that—but she has an excellent constitution. I have no fears about her; the only trouble is, she is rather inclined to be despondent, but that is a mere physical trouble. When the house is full of young people you will

see an improvement." And Kate verified the prediction. The proud girl hid her wound from the world.

The two conditions made to ensure Kate's return to Oakhill had been faithfully observed by Captain Hartley and his sister. The occupants of the little cottage hidden in the wood beyond the latticed gate had left the neighborhood of Oakhill; and Captain Hartley did not return until late in the fall, after all the guests, except Judge and Mrs. Cartaret, were gone. They stayed to welcome the expected heir.

In the last days of November the heir had come and gone, happy in that early release, in that escape from the torture of living a life which had been poisoned in its beginning. The blight never unfolded; it was only disclosed in the falling of the bud. A chain of evil that might have warped souls for a century—"unto the third and fourth generation"—was broken in the welding.

For a few hours a quivering little frame had lain beside an anguished mother, who clung stubbornly to that frail tenement of a human soul. "Born with an affection of the heart" was the interpretation of science.

The faint sound of quick breathing, the throbbing of a heart that fluttered like an imprisoned bird, a waxen baby-face and half-opened violet eyes, were the memories gathered by the young mother before she sank into insensibility; and the dead child was taken from her breast—was mercifully let sleep.

CHAPTER X.

"And the Future with the Past is set at variance;
And Life falters with the burdens which it has."

ON the morning of Mrs. Hartley's first appearance in the breakfast-room after her illness, her father's congratulations upon her recovery were quickly followed by the announcement of his purpose to leave Oakhill on the next day.

In the manner of the announcement there was more of hesitation than of regret—scarcely an appearance of sadness, but a visible effort not to give offence in the telling. Even to Judge Cartaret, unsuspicious as he was, it was evident that there was a hidden skeleton in the house. During her illness his daughter had not always been able to hide the shuddering repulsion she felt for her husband.

The judge's mind worked slowly, but he had one very judicial faculty—clearness in the summing up of evidence. Without being altogether

conscious, in the beginning, of the mental process involved, he had been collecting and collating facts ever since his coming to Oakhill. All of his wife's diplomatic skill had failed to blind him. His liking for Captain Hartley had been, from the first moment of their meeting, more a thing of courtesy to his wife than of reality; and, as the proverb puts it pithily, the more he saw of him the less he liked him. In fact, there was a rapidly growing dislike, which of itself was a thing of terror to an amiable conventionalist.

In the thick of doubts the only positive impression made upon Judge Cartaret's mind was fear of the result if he should stay longer at Oakhill. If Kate continued to follow him with that pitiful, wistful look of entreaty; if her eyes, so like her mother's, pursued him from room to room, he knew he must yield to their dumb pleading. He loved his daughter dearly; but, unhappily, he loved the world's good opinion as well. Every fault of his character grew out of, or was in some way allied to, this conventional cowardice. His very virtues were so tainted by it, were so cramped and distorted, that they had in a measure become passive vices. He tried hard to comfort

himself with the thought that Kate's marriage was not of his advising, that he had been over-persuaded by his wife—by Kate herself. Then conscience struck home, reminding him of his daughter's youth, of her ignorant innocence; telling him that he had known of weighty reasons for objection, which he had only to tell and the telling would have ensured her ready obedience. He was compelled to admit to himself, in this court of equity where he was trying himself, that the dollars of the millionaire had outweighed evidence.

When his false judgment became clearly apparent to him, and he saw how it had wrought his daughter's unhappiness, conscience reminded him of another decision he had made when the lack of money had caused him to give judgment against an honorable gentleman and gallant soldier. He had used all the power his cousin's will had given him to prevent the marriage of his cousin's daughter, Margaret, to Leszinksky. He had stretched his authority to the utmost verge. And although his ward had waited dutifully until she was legally of age before marrying without his consent, he had made the trials of her life heavier by keeping from her

every dollar the law let him retain. Even now since her death he had made no allowance to her child from the money he was yearly adding to the great Cartaret estate. To do Judge Cartaret full justice, I think he would have been glad to make bountiful provision for Margaret's child, Rue, if Major Leszinksky had only asked him. But just then the great fault in his character that I have mentioned blinded his sense of justice. Or, to define it more exactly, it poisoned his sense of right. He would do nothing in the present which implied an admission of wrong in the past. He would not give voluntarily to Margaret's child what he had withheld from Margaret herself. He resented Leszinksky's self-respectful independence, calling it in his thoughts "the stubborn folly of a fool."

But underlying his thoughts, troubling his selfish attempt at self-justification, there was a sub-consciousness of wrong that, through failure of repentance, embittered Judge Cartaret against the Leszinkskys. He wished that some need, some misfortune would force the proud soldier to ask for assistance. Then—his vanity sweetened the fancy—how generous he would be! He felt a glow of delight at the mere thought

of his own praiseworthy benevolence. He knew it would reap an abundant harvest—win him "golden opinions from all sorts of men."

All Virginia knew the value of the great Cartaret estate; knew the provisions of Colonel Cartaret's will, and that the estate would revert to Judge Cartaret's own son if one young life should go out. Why, all Virginia would ring with the story of Judge Cartaret's disinterestedness should he settle the Leszinkskys at "the Cedars." And he would do it—if Leszinksky would only give him occasion. But the world must know it was a charity, not a tardy amend. He would be generous, but generosity must justify him—must brilliantly illuminate the probity of his guardianship.

Kate's troubles had brought about this settlement with conscience by contingent promises, but Kate herself clouded her father's beatific vision of his apotheosis. Her suffering was not one of the peculiar varieties of suffering the world tolerates.

That particular portion of earth which, with its inhabitants, constituted the world to Judge Cartaret was sternly intolerant if a woman made any outcry of discontent, any sound to shock

the ears of the neophytes who wait in the porch of the temple of marriage.

It had from the earliest colonial days been a matter of pride and self-laudation to more than one of the Southern States that divorces were unknown in their courts of justice.

The law of marriage was a Median law—not to be broken. I do not know that it was "so nominated in the bond," but it was universally understood that the disgrace and obloquy of its fracture, if fractured, would reflect upon the woman. I do not assert that men were more virtuous or more manly through this prophetically vicarious suffering of women, but it certainly had a strengthening effect upon the warned and weaker sex. They learned to bear their burdens and make no sign. The martyrs were the leaven that leavened their sex with the purest courage —endurance.

With an equally decorous chance for widowhood, I doubt if they would have been as devoted as Alcestis; but I am sure a Southern woman would have thought it more proper to have stayed in Hades than to have returned thence with Hercules.

This conventionality was intensified by the

narrowness of its channel. The remoteness from the reactive ebb and flood of metropolitan thought made small things appear great.

Yet there was a certain dignity and stateliness in the old plantation life that gave it rare flavor. The gentry were all akin, and there was but little censorious speech; but they owed certain debts to their order, and such debts were the only ones that were frequently mentioned and never remitted.

Noblesse oblige was reason for a duel, and reason for a woman to suffer mutely. These unwritten laws caused terrible suffering, but there was less scandal.

If a woman died of her torture there was a comforting tombstone that catalogued her virtues and epitomized the grief of the bereaved widower.

If two hot-brained young springalds glanced down the steely-blue barrels of duelling-pistols in the early dawn, and one was left motionless on the cool, dewy greensward, why,

> "The palpitating fever
> Cooled at once by that blood-let."

One had paid the fool's debt of honor, and the other was an "honorable man," who henceforth

proudly bore the mark of Cain. What matter if some trembling woman, sweetheart, wife, or childless mother, started aghast at the sight?

A society with such customs and of such components was the tribunal Judge Cartaret dared not face with a married and husbandless, though unwidowed, daughter upon his arm. He knew what such championship would cost. There was his son—only too ready a shot. And the girl herself, pure, innocent, and blameless, as he knew her to be—her very youth and beauty would condemn her to the shelter of seclusion. How could such a child stand against the sentiment of her own sex when the blood of the martyrs who had suffered and submitted to suffering should cry out against her? Then his cheek burnt with wrath at the thought of the men who would warmly or coldly look their pity. No! she must bide under the shelter of her husband's roof with the sad company of her lost love-dreams. For his son's sake, for her sake, he dare not assist her to freedom from this most horrible slavery, this serfdom of the soul, that suffers through the senses.

I do not wish to do Judge Cartaret the slightest injustice. (We were friends and neighbors in

the old golden days before the flood; when the carpet-bagger had not yet squeezed the fatness from the land; before the siren song of the Readjuster had stolen the hearts of the Stalwarts; when dollars were in my pocket and duns were an unknown entity; when gentlemen were gentlemen, and there seemed no more probability of my being "one of them blanked literary fellows" than that the utterer of that aphorism should grow to such greatness that he hath made pigmies of us all.) I repeat that I am reluctant to condemn my old friend. I am willing to believe that he did not know quite what a scoundrel his daughter had married. Hartley had governed himself, had kept an appearance of courtesy, almost of devotion, to his wife, and Mrs. Cartaret had labored to screen any chance omission.

One thing the judge did know (I am sorry to have to admit how much of that "rascally virtue, prudence," he possessed in common with another time-serving Virginian)—he knew his daughter's wretchedness. It pained him to see her suffer; but because the world was his god he could not snatch her from under its car. More selfish, or less courageous, than the

fanatical Hindoo, he could leave her to the fate whose blow he dared not witness, and from which he dared not save her.

Unfortunately for Judge Cartaret's peace of mind, he was forced into the one thing he had most earnestly striven to avoid, which was an explanation with his daughter.

When he announced his intention to leave Oakhill Captain Hartley hospitably urged his stay, "at least until after the holidays were past."

Kate said not a word, but her face grew bright and expectant. Mrs. Cartaret was busy with letters and papers, leaving her husband to find his own excuses for repeated refusal to stay. Embarrassed at the transparency of his own pretexts, and the appeal in Kate's face that he could not wholly understand, Judge Cartaret pleaded letters that must be written, and escaped to his wife's sitting-room, leaving the question of their immediate departure still undetermined.

Mrs. Cartaret crushed her letters impatiently and turned to her brother:

"I wish, Wenner, if you are not particularly engaged, you would look over some of these papers with me. My memoranda do not agree

with the accounts of the executor. It is a point of delicacy with Judge Cartaret not to interfere in my Hilton settlements."

A smile on her face and a very decided sneer on her brother's marked their valuation of the "point of delicacy." Kate rose from her chair, saying to Mrs. Cartaret: "Then you will excuse me. You will find me in my room whenever you are at leisure."

"I will come as soon as we get through with these tiresome papers. You are wise in getting to your snuggery. This is the coldest room in the house. I shall go with Wenner into his den —that is, if the omnipresent Marten is not visible there. Can we go?" addressing her brother.

"Yes. I presume your pet aversion has finished his labor; if not, he will be glad to rest."

He opened the door and bowed ceremoniously to his wife. As she passed slowly up the broad stairway the brother and sister went through the library into the room Kate had never entered since she found there the painting of Hagar.

Through the summer, when the house was full of guests, these "private rooms of Captain Hartley" had remained closed. It was tacitly understood that they were not to be used during his

absence. When he returned, which was late in the fall after the summer visitors were gone, he occupied them. The room next to Kate's, which had been his during his one day's stay at Oakhill immediately after their return from Europe, had been fitted up as a nursery for the expected heir. After the child's death, during Kate's illness, Mrs. Cartaret slept there. So Captain Hartley kept his old quarters in the east wing.

Kate walked back and forth through her dressing-room and bed-chamber. No one was there. Rose had gone, after beating the fires to a dull red, smouldering mass, from beneath which an occasional tongue of flame hissed forth like an angry viper.

The third room of the suite was closed. Kate opened the door. The room prepared for the little guest who would not stay was silent and cold. The childless young mother shuddered in this icy room. The dead child had never entered there; but Death was there. A ghostly presence seemed to clutch at her robe. She stooped over the empty cradle and smoothed the little pillow she had made with loving hands for a baby's head which had never lain upon it, saying softly:

"My baby! my baby! I am thankful you are safe! I wish I were sleeping with you, my baby, lying with your little head pillowed on my heart, out of this pain and wretchedness, this fear of sin that will stain, that is staining, my soul. For, O my baby, my baby! I cannot, cannot love your father. For your sake I have tried, have striven, but I cannot. O my darling! I cannot."

Tears fell on the pillow like great drops from a passing shower—fell, and rolled into the meshes of the dainty lace, freezing where no baby head would ever melt their ice.

CHAPTER XI.

"Nay! I have done; you get no more of me;
And I am glad—yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so clearly I myself can free."

JUDGE CARTARET, in a happy state of self-gratulation, worked away at his letters. He had made the first move toward departure successfully. He felt almost sure there would be no scene, no ill-bred outbreak, no disgraceful airing of domestic unpleasantness. There would be nothing tangible to take with him which would keep him awake o' nights; nothing that would worry him to remember except —well, yes, there were exceptions.

He said to himself: "I wish Kate had more self-control. People should hide their worries and their antipathies. I am sure I hide mine. It's confoundedly unpleasant to have a woman's eyes follow me as hers do, and so like her mother's they are. Hartley is a brute; but Kate had her own way in the marriage. Now she must con-

sider other people. One's own suffering is not everything. We all have to make sacrifices. I'm sure I do. And there is Tom to consider. If I were to take Kate home Tom would soon know what I would rather not know, and he would shoot Hartley on sight. Serve him right, too—the scornful, sneering scoundrel! I would like to knock him down myself, and would if it was not for the scandal and the unpleasantness that would come of it. Julia's brother and my daughter's husband—it's an abominable mess; but Kate—"

Hearing the door open, he looked up, and Nemesis stood before him in the form of his daughter. All of his fears gathered about him, and instinctively he tried to ward off trouble.

"You are looking tired, Kate." He stood up and pushed back the chair. She should not take him at a disadvantage. If he could help it she should not complain of her husband. He must prevent it; he already knew too much. He would not listen. If he did he would be compelled to a course of conduct that was at variance with all his ideas of decorum, of propriety; and with him those two words had very large meaning. He nervously handled his letters and pa-

pers, still standing as he talked on in broken, disconnected sentences.

"You are not strong yet; and you are sitting up too long. You know you must not overtask your strength this first day you are with us, Kate. Better go and lie down an hour or two before luncheon. The snow is whirling in drifts. The wind is rising and these halls are draughty. This is the exposed side of the house. Your room is sheltered from the storm. I will send Julia to you at once. I would go with you, but these letters must be off to-day."

"I must speak with you, papa."

"Very well, we will have a cosey talk this afternoon. But just now—you know, Kate, I hate letters, and if I am interrupted they suffer."

With a childlike gesture of appeal she put out her hand.

"I suffer, papa—I suffer so cruelly I can no longer endure this life I am compelled to lead. If you go without hearing me I know I shall be driven to something desperate. Will you help me, papa? Will you listen?"

Through her father's fears she had won a hearing. The "something desperate" was an *argumentum ad hominem.* The judge would

listen to all she wished to say, if by his listening the world might not hear.

"If it is really important, my daughter, why the letters must wait."

"They will have to wait, papa." It was said softly, with a pitiful effort to smile; but tears were gathering in the dark eyes and the lips trembled like the lips of a grieved child. The judge caught at the change in her manner—he was ready to catch at straws.

"Unless it is something you can say to Julia. She will be here in a moment; she is very proud of you, Kate, and very discreet."

"No, papa; you can tell Julia. She arranged with Captain Hartley the terms upon which I have stayed at Oakhill this summer—until my baby was born. She does not know that I have now decided to leave here."

The straws were all broken and the judge in deep water. Without another word he followed Kate to her room.

A gallant of the court in the days of Louis Quatorze who, when banqueting with the king, was suddenly arrested and hurried to the Bastile could not have been more astounded at the rattle of fetters and the clang of dungeon fastenings

than was Judge Cartaret when his daughter locked the door of her dressing-room and sat down beside him.

For a little time—one of those short spaces in which the Fates twist the thread they are spinning—there was no sound save occasional sighing gusts of the wind and sinister hisses of the tongues of flame which crept through the bars of the grate.

Kate's voice broke the silence, startling her father with its intensity :

"I have never loved Captain Hartley, papa—never as a wife should love. I must leave here at once, for I am learning to hate him. Yes, I know it is a terrible thing to say ; but, papa, it is a hundredfold worse to feel nothing but scorn and hatred for the father of my dead baby." Again the sensitive lips quivered, but with resolute effort the low, sweet voice steadied as she continued :

"I have tried to see what was right, to do what was right. In the beginning I tried my very best, papa. Do not think it is altogether my fault. I did not know just what marriage meant. I did not think it could be such a curse, that it could make one so wretched. I was so young

when I left you, papa; and you had been so kind, so indulgent. Life seemed such a bright, such a glad thing. I knew no evil in it; I could not believe or understand Tom's warning. It seemed to me but simple justice to give love for love. I thought it ungenerous to receive without giving; and Julia was so kind, and her brother—well, I had not learned what untruths were lived in the world. I thought my hesitation pained Julia and grieved her brother. Then I promised to marry him if you consented."

That was the very stab her father had feared—"if you consented"; and the girl was so evidently innocent of intention to wound. It was as if a child, playing with the spear of Ithuriel, had unconsciously touched him and pierced through the gauds of the world and the shell of self. The history of Hartley's past, which his son had so passionately pleaded against his acceptance of the rich suitor, seemed to picture itself in the smouldering fire and the tongues of flame. He could only dumbly listen to the voice of the victim he had given to Erinnys.

"I do not think you were quite willing, papa, but you thought it was for my happiness. You

were always indulgent to me, generous, and loving. O papa! how could I think any one would ever be unkind or cruel to me? I knew Tom did not like Captain Hartley. I thought he was prejudiced, that his opposition was the result of his dislike; but Tom, with his fiery temper, never said a harsh word to me in all my life. Papa, should I have expected less from a husband than from a brother?"

He was compelled to speak:

"Certainly not; but this fellow is not a gentleman."

The words came through half-shut teeth, as if they forced themselves into speech.

"No, papa, he is not a gentleman; that is the horror of it. I told him so when he cursed me—he proved it by a blow."

"Cursed you? struck you? My God! did he strike you?"

The indignant father caught his child to his heart. Nature had torn away the last shred of conventionalism. He was no longer the mere courtly gentleman considering the quarterings of his blazon. He was a Man, outraged through this insult to a woman dependent on his protection. The girl, with her arms about his neck,

weeping upon his breast, felt the sobs that shook him like a tempest.

"Papa! papa! it is worse than my own pain to see you so grieved. Papa, he never struck me but once. I would not listen to any apology from him. But Julia begged me for your sake, for my baby's sake, not to tell you, not to wait in New York, but to come here with her. He was to leave Oakhill. She promised he would not return here until all our visitors were gone. He did go to New Mexico; he did not return until his sister wrote him to come. She said he must be here when—when my baby came, or else you would know of our separation. I hoped to be able to forgive him for his child's sake. But my baby was the only hope of that. Now all our ties are broken. If it had lived—and he did send the woman away; she was gone that day—the day I came back with Julia. The day before you left New York he sent her away."

In a choked voice he asked:

"What woman?"

"The mother of that beautiful child—his child. It was near her cottage, in the shrubbery beyond the latticed gate, that he found me—that he struck me."

Holding his daughter as if to shield her, kissing her hair and forehead and tearful eyes, Judge Cartaret said:

"Bathe your face, my daughter; I will send Rose to get you some wine. Tell her to pack up the things you will need. I shall take you with me at once to New York. I cannot settle with that scoundrel in his own house. But can you go, Kate? Are you well enough to go out in this storm? I cannot risk your health, my child; and I do not like to leave you another day in this house."

"Yes, I can go, papa. I can bear anything but to stay here—alone with him. But you, papa? For Julia's sake, for my dead baby's sake, you will not—"

"Be calm, my child. I cannot fight the cowardly brute, much as I wish it. But Tom is not so fettered."

"Papa! O papa! Tom must not know."

There was a quick knocking at the door.

"Rose!"

"No, it is not Rose. It is I—Julia. Is your father there, Kate?"

"Yes."

"I must see him immediately. Tell him to

come to my room. There is a messenger here from Belleview."

They heard her walk away.

"Please go, papa. You can tell Julia I am going with you. And say, papa, with my love, that I had rather not see her before we go. Unless, papa—do you wish her to go with us?"

"No; she is not ready. Rose can finish your packing and come with Julia to-morrow. Dress very warmly, my daughter. We shall have to drive to New York. There is no train until late this afternoon."

"Yes, papa."

In the hall Captain Hartley was waiting for Judge Cartaret. He held out a letter, saying:

"Judge, you had better come to the library to read this letter. The messenger who brought it is there."

Without a word or gesture to show his knowledge of Hartley's presence, Judge Cartaret started down the stairway, when he met Rose coming up. She had a scared, ashen face.

"Rose, where is Sandy?"

"In the kitchen, marster."

"Tell him to go to Yonkers and get the best horses they have in the livery-stable and a close,

comfortable carriage. I shall drive to New York, and he must come with the carriage at once. Do you understand? At once."

"Yes, marster."

CHAPTER XII.

"What is he but a brute
Whose flesh hath soul to suit?"

THE Hilton papers were soon disposed of by Mrs. Cartaret and Captain Hartley, and Mrs. Cartaret's real subject of discussion in the interview she had asked for was reached in this question:

"Have you had any explanation with Kate? Have you arranged anything for the future, Wenner? It will not do to leave things as they are, to trust to her having forgiven your offence."

"I thought you were the treaty-maker. I have done nothing, except to observe very faithfully the conditions she made. I have neither spoken to her nor have I seen her except in her father's presence or yours. That was the condition to be observed on my return here. The banishment of Lucy was instantaneous. It was accomplished the day she ordered it. There was

nothing more required—at least I so understood. If there is a hitch the error is in your diplomacy. Was it only an armed truce you arranged?"

"It is an armed truce. Your phrase very correctly defines it. Kate made conditions which you accepted to secure her stay here—her silence. But her promises were limited. They ended with the birth of her child. Since its death I do not know what she may do, what she has decided. It needed all the diplomacy you so sneeringly mention to persuade her to return to Oakhill; to leave New York that morning without seeing her father; to keep silent when he came here. Now, if further 'diplomacy' is needed you must be your own ambassador."

Hartley was standing by the open wood fire. A burning log broke and rolled against the fender. He violently kicked it in place, sending after it a volley of fierce oaths.

"Wenner!"

"What more have you to say?" With spiteful rage he threw this question at his sister.

"You are such a brute that for Kate's own sake I shall be glad if she does come to Belleview. You need not practise that basilisk glare. I am not your wife; you dare not strike me! If you

do not govern your language and your temper I will neither listen to you nor try to excuse you to Kate or her father when she tells him the story of her life with you."

"Curse them all! I hate the breed." Looking at his sister, he was discreet enough to stop there. The expression in her face warned him to be cautious. He clenched his long, white teeth beneath the parted lips, that gave a wolfish expression to the narrow, pale face which was fringed with dark red whiskers, and waited with what patience he could muster for the thrust he knew was coming.

"It was as much cowardly fear of the Cartaret gentlemen as anxiety to preserve the position your connection with the Cartarets gave you that made you so humble in apology last summer. You knew you had passed bounds which it was not safe to pass. The pride that helped Kate to conceal her suffering, to bear neglect and the petty tortures of her daily life, had driven her to desperation. You did not care to face a settlement with the Cartarets. For some reason I was once almost silly enough to believe it a sentiment of natural affection, and that you wished to preserve the life of Kate's child.

Possibly you have the instinct of parental love. Your self-love may include your children in its narrow circle. I remember you seemed really fond of that woman's child—that poor 'Hagar' you sent away."

It had been a fierce struggle, but he had mastered his temper when at white heat. He remembered that he could not perfect his plans for the future without his sister's assistance. He believed he could win her assistance. Although she knew him thoroughly and frequently failed to withhold frank, contemptuous expression of that knowledge, he was sure that at heart she loved him loyally. Had she not loved him he would have had more respect for her; it was a weakness, something to be counted when he reckoned up his chances, so he gave neither respect nor love for love. But just then he needed her help; and words are cheap tempters. "Forgive me, Julia. You know I have not over-much patience, and you see with what contempt that girl regards me. You talk of the sacrifice of her pride. Do you think it has cost me nothing to come to Oakhill and live here through the last six weeks—six weeks given to the stubborn, silent fool and that old idiot, her father?"

"You are speaking of your wife and of my husband; that last I insist you shall remember."

"I cannot well forget the double relationship. But I do not think you need take offence at what I say. Neither of us has wholly neglected opportunities. You made one love-match which taught you how dearly love could cost—"

"Do not speak of that—you shall not!"

"I intend to say nothing which is disagreeable, but I am summing up facts; once for all let us count them fairly. When you met Judge Cartaret you were a beautiful widow with luxurious tastes and no resources. Your patrimony, never much, had been spent. Your life here with old Simon Hartley was one of bitter dependence; his housekeeper, the unacknowledged daughter of our father, had a better position than yours in the old miser's household. And your position was likely to be more unbearable when his son returned from Europe with the wife who had taken the husband you refused in your romantic girlish days. You did the very best thing possible when you married Judge Cartaret. You were wiser than I dared hope you would be. You see you have a tendency to the infeasible, the impracticable—just a touch

upon the brain, a weak place somewhere, a leaning to romantic vagaries. But the old man here taught you the value of wealth and the bitterness of dependence. I do not wonder you esteem the Carterets highly. What a contrast it must have been!—the princely hospitality, the elegant courtesy of those Virginians; after two years of black bread salted with allusion to the husband who left you penniless."

"I tell you, Wenner, you shall not speak of him."

"I will not again offend. Your faithfulness does you credit. I wonder where you came by that quality? It does not run in the Hartley blood, except in the channel of self. It is your vagary alone. I do not suppose you ever would have married again if that ship had gone down, with the old miser's progeny aboard, four months earlier, and had been hard followed, as it was later, by old Simon's death. But it is better that you did marry again. You have position as well as wealth. Why, when I came into old Simon's savings I married for like reasons."

"But Kate had no fortune."

"You will forget 'the great Cartaret estate'—that semi-royal residence, 'the Cedars,'—I think

I shall prefer it to Oakhill; and pray remember the almost numberless investments of growing capital made by your husband. Now I shall flatter you through him." They both smiled (her anger was gone, his was hidden) as he continued: "Judge Cartaret's management of Mrs. Leszinksky's inheritance has been simply admirable. Her heirs are much indebted to him"—indicating himself by touch as one of the grateful throng, he bowed mockingly.

"But what possible chance has Kate to inherit the Cedars? There is Mrs. Leszinksky's child. I have never heard that Rue is at all delicate. Then before Kate—and even her interest you do not seem likely to secure—there is Tom Cartaret. You do not know the last news from Tom. It is not to be publicly told before Christmas. I thought you were the reason he would not come here this summer; but it seems he stayed at Buffalo Springs, and lingered through the hunting season this fall in Mecklenburg to some purpose. He is engaged to Mildred Hamner. Kate has not the shadow of a chance to own the 'Cedars.'"

"No matter how shadowy the chance. It is one I have heavily backed. I have staked old

Simon Hartley's estate and my handsome person on that glimmering shadow, and I expect to win. So Tom is hunting in Mecklenburg?"

The long, white teeth were fully shown as Hartley's clear, mocking laugh rang out. There was a half-fearful, curious look in Mrs. Cartaret's eyes.

"What can you mean, Wenner?"

"Why, luck to the Mecklenburg hunt. The hunters will sigh in vain for the brush of a fox. Tom will take them all. He is a plucky rider and will gallantly lead. Not a brush will he fail to lay at his sweetheart's feet, if he is only well mounted."

"He has with him the best-bred horse in 'the Cedars'' stables and that English hunter you sent over." Suddenly Mrs. Cartaret paled visibly. Again her brother laughed. There was a short silence, then she spoke; her words showed where her thoughts had strayed. "If you care for any one in the world, Wenner, it is that beautiful child of Lucy's. Had she been humpbacked or plain I suppose you would have detested her. But being an identical likeness of yourself, your vanity has won her a certain place in your affection. I do not believe that affection would out-

live a case of confluent smallpox or a bad disfigurement, but it will exist while she pleases your sense of beauty."

"She is a beautiful child, and I am fond of her, although I have long wanted to get rid of her mother. It was the merest bosh for Kate to be in such a rage that day. I would have shipped Lucy long ago but for the child. And she was not in the house here. I never did quite know how Kate found her way to the cottage that morning. I was there to tell Lucy of a change I wished made. In some way this charming half-sister of ours, this hereditary housekeeper planted by old Simon's will at Oakhill, had taken Lucy under her sheltering wing—a fellow-feeling, I presume, among these daughters of nobody—so it was difficult to arrange Lucy's separation from the child. And I wanted Mai away from her. Lucy is unmistakably a quadroon. Any negro-trader could tell the taint in her blood. But Mai is pure to sight as a lily—much fairer than that little wild-cat of Leszinksky's."

Something in the comparison or in a memory made Hartley's face darken. He was looking out at the fast-flying, driving snow. His sister

sat watching him, thinking of Kate and the chance of a reconciliation, when some one knocked at the door leading to the library—the door of the curtained recess. At Hartley's bidding the door opened and Marten came in announcing an arrival:

"Mr. Richard Freeman is here, sir; he drove out from New York. He left Belleview yesterday. There is very bad news, sir, for Judge Cartaret."

"What is it, do you know?"

"Mr. Tom Cartaret is dead, sir."

"Are you sure?"

Mrs. Cartaret trembled violently. Her brother repeated the inquiry in an expectant, hushed tone.

"Yes, sir. I saw Mr. Richard myself. He sent for me to come out. He wanted you to be told first, so you could break the news to Judge Cartaret. He brought a letter for him from Doctor Cabell. But the doctor cautioned him not to deliver it until the judge was prepared."

"Do you know when Tom died?"

"Three days ago, sir. He was out hunting in Mecklenburg. The English horse he was riding refused to take a fence. Mr. Tom sent him

at it, and he reared and swerved. Mr. Tom was on the ground when the horse struck him and killed him. Mr. Richard was with him; he saw the horse kill him. He says the brute was so vicious he seemed gone mad."

"God have mercy! It is too horrible!" moaned Mrs. Cartaret. Hartley's face was livid in its pallor. With a quick glance at his sister he asked:

"Where is Richard Freeman?"

"In the dining-room, sir. He gave me this letter of Doctor Cabell's for you."

"Tell him I will see him soon. He must come to the library and see Judge Cartaret as soon as the judge comes down." As Marten left the room Hartley said to his sister:

"Julia! command yourself. You must exert all your self-control. It will be best for you to see Judge Cartaret and tell him there is a messenger here from Belleview. Tell him nothing more. I will wait in the hall and bring him down to the library to see Richard. You must be careful not to alarm Kate. The doctor must be here before she is told. I will try to break the news to her father."

Mrs. Cartaret shuddered as her brother touch-

ed her shoulder; she shrank from his hand and turned to leave the room. He followed his sister up the stairway, first telling Marten, who was waiting in the hall, to take Richard Freeman to the library, and then keep the servants away and the house quiet. Mrs. Cartaret came out of her room; meeting her brother in the doorway, she exclaimed in a frightened, anguished tone:

"My husband is not here. I think he is with Kate. I cannot go to them. I will wait here for him."

"Julia, you must go."

He took her hand and forced her into her room, shutting the door after him. She struggled to get free. Holding her firmly, he continued:

"You are absurd in your terror. Are you so stupid that you think me responsible for this accident?"

"You bought that horse. Did you know he was vicious?"

"Yes; and wrote Tom that at times he was unmanageable."

At some length he explained the orders he had had from Tom about the purchase of a hunter,

and why he had bought this one. "It was thoroughbred, of splendid action, and up to Tom's weight; cheap because difficult to manage. But Tom, knowing all, wrote to buy it." Mrs. Cartaret listened while bathing her face and waiting for her husband. At last Hartley persuaded her to go to Kate's room. She called Judge Cartaret and then went back, leaving the rest to her brother. I have told how the judge met Hartley. As he came up the stairway, after sending Rose with the message to his servant, the judge saw Hartley on the landing. Without a word, as Judge Cartaret passed, Hartley again offered Doctor Cabell's letter. Without a word the judge took it; he opened it, glanced down the page, and, turning, raised his clenched fist to strike Hartley, shouting, "You—" The shout died in his throat as he fell heavily on the floor. It was the last effort of the outraged father. The double shock had killed him.

BOOK SECOND.

PLEXUS.

"'Who was it blundered'? eh?
It is not mine to say.
But I, if breath hold out, will tell you what I saw."

PART FIRST. 1856.

IN THE GATEWAY OF WAR.

CHAPTER XIII.

"'Tis sad to hack into the roots of things,
They are so much intertwisted with the earth."

IN this act of the drama which I am writing the scene opens at the Burnet House in Cincinnati. The time was that particular week in June, 1856, when President-makers were crowding the hotels of the little inland city.

At that date Cincinnati was the commercial centre of the territory which Virginia had given to the federal government. The decline of the fur-trade of St. Louis had scattered her energetic and ambitious capitalists to distant points in New Mexico and along the Pacific coast. Louisville, with the great natural advantage of her position at the falls of the Ohio, had not then conquered the minor difficulties of the situation. Chicago, a swampy, spreading town, just beginning to overlap the barriers of prairie mud, although slowly gaining strength for that struggle with obstruction which has securely

seated her upon a throne of converging railways, was apparently belated in the race for supremacy in the Northwest. During this pause in the growth of her river rivals, and without jealousy of the lakeside town, Cincinnati had pushed steadily on in the road to wealth.

In the first decades of the State's existence Ohio was intersected with a network of commercial arteries—turnpikes that were paying dividends which enriched stockholders, and canals which were fed by rivers that watered and drained a fertile soil.*

The development of the natural wealth of the State so changed the character and condition of the inhabitants that it defeated one object of the creators of the State. In the transfer of her Northwest territory Virginia had dismembered herself to relieve the vast extent of her unsettled lands from the incubus of slavery. It needed less than a century to prove the futility of the gift as an aid to freedom. The Democratic emancipationists of the "Old Dominion" believed that the creation of free States upon the Ohio River would hedge the growth and finally extir-

* These canals soon attracted the greed of politicians, who made a very profitable "ring" of the Canal Board.

pate the evil that had been fastened upon the commonwealth in colonial days. Dominated by that belief, they set apart the Northwest territory as a refuge and a future home for free labor, which, it was hoped, would react upon the domestic institutions of the State and make practicable some plan of gradual emancipation wisely framed to benefit the newly-created freedmen without ruining the future of the emancipators. Such a hope seemed natural and reasonable to a people who had received as a cardinal point in the doctrine of human rights the grand sophism in the opening sentence of the Declaration of Independence. Their intention was excellent. But in fact the creation of this intended stronghold for a poor and pure democracy served only to develop and establish an autocratic slave-power in the Southwest, altogether different in temper and spirit from the mild and clannish serfdom which domestic servitude had become in Virginia.* The sentiment of the South Atlantic States in the latter part of the last and the earlier part of this century was largely in favor of

* With cause and effect before us it is easy to see that if Virginia had held her territory its settlement would have been less rapid and slavery would have been abolished through gradual change in the condition of the slave.

emancipation for practical as well as philanthropic reasons.* Henry Clay's well-known views on the question of emancipation were reflex ideas prevalent in his youth in the State in which he was born.

Such sentiments were spreading and were beginning to find favor. Louisiana had greatly modified her laws of servitude. The shackles of the slave were loosening, and would have speedily fallen of themselves had not the transfer of the Northwest territory to the federal government forced the removal of the Indians from the Gulf States and the Mississippi Valley, that cotton might be grown to enrich the trader, who furnished food to feed the laborers. Thus the extension of slavery was made practicable as well as profitable. The greed of the trader, of the speculator, infected the planter; the burning lust of wealth had but touched him, and his philanthropy shrivelled at the touch.

Through wasteful methods the uplands in the South Atlantic States had become worn out and comparatively useless. Tobacco had exhausted

* The Virginians who carried human chattels to Kentucky found such property unprofitable. Frontier risks for breakage and loss were too costly.

the soil of Virginia (except strips of "low grounds" on the borders of water-courses and exceptional fields of "new grounds" reclaimed from the forests that had grown up upon the waste lands). Under these conditions slavery was not only unprofitable but it was becoming burdensome; worn-out lands were demonstrating the expensiveness of slave-labor.

There were abundant and forcible economic reasons for emancipation, when suddenly the opening of a Northwestern granary which could feed the cultivators of a staple that insured wealth wrought a revolution in the situation.

Northwestern prosperity was generated in the Southwest. There were countless acres in the Mississippi Valley adapted to the growth of cotton, and their settlement would more than double the value of the slave. That these acres belonged to the Indian tribes was but a trifling difficulty—a mere matter of temporary obstruction; the Indian must go! * Choctaws, Chickasaws, Seminoles, and Creeks † were forcibly removed to the Indian Territory and settled upon

* In all the economic transactions of the United States Department of the Interior it has been necessary to remove the Indian.

† A slave-catching contingent of Creeks were left in Georgia.

lands now given to them "in perpetuity" * by a fresh but equally elastic treaty.

The removal of the Indian tribes opened a great market, and a highway of traffic to it, for the rapidly-increasing surplus of Northwestern produce, and transformed simple agriculturists into grasping traders. The very fluctuation of profit increased the attraction. The rage for speculation which succeeds and co-exists with those more simple and open forms of gambling which follow the pioneer westward induced each little settlement to adventure its surplus. Frontiersmen were no longer content with the homely comforts or modest profits of frontier farming. Flatboats were launched from every settlement on the Ohio and its northern tributaries to trade with the equally adventurous planter who took quick possession of the "vacated lands." Steamboats increased and extended this intersectional trade—a trade that founded and fostered the material prosperity of Ohio. Cincinnati †

* In the dictionary of white treaty-makers "in perpetuity" means until the Indian reservations develop either agricultural or mineral value—in short, until they are desirable to white settlers.

† The meat-pedlars, bakers, and well-to-do butchers of her village and town days, incipient millionaires, were soon covering Mill Creek Bottom with cattle-sheds, mills, and slaughter-houses. Year after year there were steady and large accessions to the ever-active army of mill-owners and

led the State in this race for wealth, and drew her profit from the labor of the slave upon the land of the Indian.* The settlement of the vacated lands upon the Mississippi soon proved that a staple could be as powerful a factor in politics as in commerce. It was a fact of which the world had long been dimly cognizant. The feuds in the Democratic party and the disruption of the old conservative Whig party, by one according and the other refusing consent to the exactions of the cotton States, made the power of the new factor apparent to the merest tyro in state-craft.†

One fact universally patent was that the staple was royally enriching the planters of the South and their providers and factors in the North.

pork-packers, who were feeding the negroes on the cotton and sugar plantations of the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf coast. The guild of distillers on the banks of the "Big" and "Little Miami" was no less active in sending southwest the fiery juice of the yellow maize, until every landing on the Arkansas and the Mississippi, at high and low water, was flooded with "Dean's Best" and other less pretentious but no less dangerous brands.

* The commercial spirit that brought the negro from Africa and drew its profit from slave-ships, that made the negro-trader a possibility and a power in the Southwest, built the cities of the Northwest, as it had the factories of New England, upon the profit of slave-labor.

† It had such an effect upon the surface-thinkers that they rushed to the other extreme of faith and stupidly believed in the illimitable rule of "King Cotton."

All increased their ventures, that more negroes might be bought to raise cotton and more cotton raised to buy negroes. Thus the freedom of the slave was retarded by the unexampled growth of Virginia's free territory.

The disputes in and out of the Democratic Convention which assembled at Cincinnati in 1856, the vindictive bitterness of rival delegations, the quarrel of the "Hards" and the "Softs," foreshadowed the end of this factitious prosperity.

The cause and its final consequence being part of the force and movement of this drama, the *deus ex machinâ*, it was needful to show that the transfer of the larger portion of the area of Virginia to the federal government, and the consequent removal of the Indian tribes, came near ending the Union which it was intended to strengthen.* It is only fair to say that the sin of slavery does not wholly rest at the door of the South—certainly not upon the lintel of Virginia.

* Fiction is often the most truthful and faithful conservator of history.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The western wind was mild and dark with foam,
And all alone went she"

IN one of a suite of rooms on the first floor of the Burnet House, near the Vine Street entrance, Captain Hartley was seated at a small table by an open window, busily writing. A door of communication with a larger room was slightly ajar. In there a party of delegates to the convention, and some few of their attendant satellites of the lobby, were noisily discussing the chances of the Presidential candidates. They had broken into groups of talkers, and the only silent listeners were the smokers in the windows opening on the balcony which overhung the Vine Street pavement.

There was such a confusion of voices that the writer in the small room could hear nothing distinctly except the repetition of certain names. The constant arrival and departure of carriages and stages that rattled up and down the hill and

around the corners into Third Street increased the medley of sound.

The entrance of a waiter with a fresh supply of "Longworth's Sparkling" and many foaming glasses of "Catawba Cobblers" created a temporary lull in the committee-room until a squad of New York "Hards" contemptuously expressed their disgust with "this weak wine slush," and, putting on the straw hats with which they had been trying to stir the breezeless air, followed a leader who proposed to "go up to the Waverley and see if Rynders has got there. If he has we'll get the fellows and go wake the echoes over the 'Rhine.' I would rather swill beer with the Dutchmen than demoralize my stomach with such stuff as this." With the departure of the disgusted detachment the conversation became more coherent.

First disjointed sentences, and then, as they settled to steady discussion, all the conversation reached Hartley, accented by the popping of corks, the fizzing of wine, and the rattle of ice in the thin, resonant glasses.

"I say, Breckenridge is working for Buchanan —working to push his own interest. He is bitten with—" "We have to face the fact that the

Softs are well organized—" "A set of Missouri Abolitionists gone off on the same craze—" "But the party must be kept out of the row; they are all crazy on color—" "It is simply the beginning of the retrograde movement. The centripetal and centrifugal forces of the nation and the State will do the rest." "The South is no longer safe in the hands of a New-Englander. There is a sinister motive in this bid for our support. It is always the same cry: 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink,' and when Cæsar reaches the shore he kicks Cassius into the water." "As if Slidell could do anything to heal the breach between the split factions! It is the extreme of folly for any self-selected umpire to propose a conference to New York rival delegations. Slidell had better look at home; there is Louisiana divided, and Soulé working furiously for Douglas." "The Bonaparte is proven as clearly in Soulé's combinations as in his face: '*bon sang ne ment pas.*'" "In the convention noise and numbers will go for Old Buck, but brains are against him." "As if brains ever won against such odds!"

"Benton is for Buchanan."

"Then it is clear the brains go the other way.

The Missourian is a man of one idea. With him there is but one question, and I would like to ask that for him: 'What is he to get?' "

"I do not think he knows just what he wants. Somebody asked him if he was coming to the convention; his answer was: 'Yes, sir; yes. Like the wild hog, sir, he can be tolled up to eat corn, sir, but he can't be coaxed into the pen, sir—can't be coaxed.' Those were the exact words of the oracle. Can any priest of his tell what they mean?"

"Why, that he wants the corn, but prefers to pick it up outside the pen."

"You do not understand Benton; he is a great man and a pure patriot." There was a burst of laughter, but the Bentonite continued: "He is abused as an Abolitionist; but hear him. He says: 'I consider a slavery agitation and its natural offspring, sectional agitation, the greatest curse, both socially and politically, which could befall our Union.' Would an Abolitionist have said that?"

"*Dulce, et cætera*—fine words. I wonder where he stole 'em? There is nothing safer in politics than a rhetorical burst. It is effective for the time, and counts for nothing when the moment

for action arrives. Do you think Benton will go with the South should the sovereign States dissolve this federal Union, which Greeley defines as a 'compact with hell,' and which Bob Toombs designates as 'the devil's *bund*'?"

"Of course he would. Benton is first and last a Missourian, and Missouri is a Southern State with a large slave-holding population."

"O man of much faith! Missouri would then be a border State in reality. The Free-Soil party with which your favorite has affiliated would be a power in Missouri. The North would offer them the State as a bribe, and Benton would stick by the flesh-pots of Egypt. So will our South-loving Illinoisians. I am a Southerner, but I am not blind. I know that when the wind veers the weathercocks turn. In my dictionary I define MAN as 'an animal which consults its own interest by seeking security and safety at the expense of its fellows.' If the cyclone of secession ever strikes the United States we of the South will find in our loving Northwest a nest of malignants. New England is tied to the slave-fields by the fibre of cotton, and the Northwest is enamored of the profit slave-labor pays as yearly tribute. The

possessive case is endearing, but if you change it to the objective and shatter interest you kill affection. North and South are in perfect unity regarding the Indian, because he is unprofitable and in the way; but they are very ready to divide on the negro question whenever interest is divided. The national conscience is a chameleon, which changes its color to suit the crime over which it crawls."

"'Saul among the prophets'—a Virginian calling slavery a crime!"

"So did Jefferson and Randolph. I do not belie my blood or breeding. I respect the extreme Abolitionists who fight for a principle and refuse a compromise. Had I been born among them I should have been of them. As it is, seeing the futility of Abolitionism, I am a Virginian Emancipationist."

"Little credit that will bring you with extremists. Listen to this from the New York *Tribune:* 'Southern insolence keeps pace with Northern pusillanimity.' Then Mr. Greeley hopes that 'the first act of the new *régime* will be to subject to ten years' imprisonment in the penitentiary any one making an assault upon a member of Congress while at Washing-

ton, or going or returning from there.' Then he likens the Federal legislators to the Roman 'Tribunes of the People,' and insists that 'they shall be clothed with an absolute personal inviolability.'"

"I believe the tendency of the Whig party and its fragments is to imperialism; and here is fresh proof that my belief is well grounded: A leader of opinion—and, mark it, a man born of the working-class—advises the creation of a privileged aristocracy. This advice is the forerunner of what is to come, the beginning of the end—the prologue in the tragedy of the Columbian empire. It is accented by the resolution introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature, instructing the adjutant-general of the State to furnish its senators and representatives in Congress with Colt's revolvers. And they do not stop there. These Puritans propose an appropriation to send Sumner a body-guard. In plain words, they would commence a civil war by arming and equipping the patricians and their followers."

"Oh! that Sumner affair [there was a volley of the strong Saxon words which foreigners catch so quickly] has set those fool Carolinians to voting canes to Brooks."

"Yes; hold two bullies apart and the devil couldn't wish them in a better fighting humor. Massachusetts and South Carolina raise quarrels to turn into their neighbors' grounds. They've started a nice brood in New York—"

"The Softs are rotten Abolitionists at heart —" (Here was a Babel of noise and interruption, then more broken phrases.)

"Davis, Cushing, and Pierce have no cohesive attraction. They are explosive forces. The Administration would never have held together without Marcy's iron hand—" "Nonsense! Jefferson Davis is the real President; Pierce is a weak, vacillating—" "The Silver Grays lean that way. The coalition will make a desperate effort to coerce the convention." "Wiggins won't be brow-beaten, but will denounce Pierce. The cohesive power of the public plunder—" "Will attract Ben Butler and his following; he has this advantage over Griswold, that—" "He has no scruples, and he comes with a cohort of rogues and roughs—" "Nice backers for Sickles, Kelley, and Tom Hyer! He may do his level best; and then Pierce and Douglas—" "But Marcy's friends are a solid phalanx—" "A pretty lot of fools.

Marcy has no fixed principle or policy. He is equally ready to recognize Walker or to go in partnership with John Bull. And he daresn't squeak if Americans are shot—"

"But it was Marcy's suggestion—"

"All gammon!—as if the gray-eyed man of destiny would be senator from Nicaragua. Such a supposition is an insult to his future. He is the Napoleon of the coming Central American Confederation, the hope of the creoles of Cuba. Goicouria is pledged to him, and there will be no lack of Anglo-Saxons to back him. He has the sympathy of the United States, and a closer bond—that of interest. We see clearly our advantage in handling the products of Mexican mines, to say nothing of the cotton, sugar, and coffee districts, that promise limitless trade and profit in the future. Why, Walker's success would in the end give us the whole of Mexico. We blundered by not taking every foot of it when we stopped at the Rio Grande. The entire commercial world would be benefited by Anglo-Saxon domination on this continent. Spanish-American hybrids are a failure. Walker's success means social, political, and religious progress; and we'll have devilish

hard work to find a serviceable pretext to round out our dominion on this continent, unless we leave Walker free to work out his problem. To do that we only need stick to the Monroe doctrine and prevent European interference."

"But don't you see that is just what Marcy means—"

"Who will undertake to tell what Marcy means?"

"Why, the facts—the facts tell. I am sure they speak plainly. The compulsory withdrawal of Crampton and the obnoxious consuls will teach John Bull the full value of the Monroe doctrine."

"The withdrawal of Crampton was demanded on different ground."

"Not at all; recruiting for the British service was not the only reason. There was Crampton's failure to transmit Clarendon's letter in that very affair of the Mosquito protectorate. In that letter Clarendon says of the 'Monroe doctrine': "Her majesty's government cannot admit that doctrine as an international axiom which ought to regulate the conduct of the European states.' Then he goes further and insinuates a criticism of our Indian policy when he adds: 'It is an ethno-

logical question. Whether Indians ought to be allowed to constitute an independent state depends on whether they can carry on a civil government. The United States considered that settled, and never tried by experience to discover what savages could become.' "

A queer falsetto voice, in which the accent betrayed the affectation of an occasional lapse into dialect, drawled: "No more we have; and I reckon by the time we are hard up enough for such an asinine experiment there won't be enough savages left to legislate for a township. We are finishing them up mighty lively on the frontier. It appears like the Indian Department ain't fully up to the mark, ain't wide awake to their own interest. They've a first-class patronage machine, but they're running it to burst. They are killing their goose and forgetting about the golden eggs. Considering how many political bummers live on the offal of our Indian policy, it isn't economic to waste the raw material. Better breed Indians than kill 'em. But what the —— has that to do with the Monroe doctrine?"

The uproarious shout that greeted the words of the new speaker did not discourage Marcy's

zealous partisan. He vehemently cried out: "Why, this Mosquito business is everything to the Monroe doctrine. That doctrine is, 'The American continents, by the free and independent condition they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered subjects for future colonization by any European powers.'"

A half-derisive yet good-natured laugh at the declamatory recitation of the quoted "doctrine," hushed as the drawling falsetto again claimed a hearing:

"Well, my notion is if John Bull wants to meddle with the Muskeeters, why, let him take the chance of being stung. He's thin-skinned and tender, and he'll get enough of it pretty cussed quick. He'll have to hop round lively to come up with Walker; and when he does Walker will be mighty apt to play a lone hand with Johnny. The New Nicaraguaian has a fistful of trumps and a set of backers that won't care a continental damn for the British lion."

There was a rapturous assent to the sentiment of this evident favorite. Then the Marcy advocate began:

"From first to last Marcy has admirably man-

aged the Walker affair. There were complications and contingencies to be considered. Palmerston, an aristocrat by birth, association, and ambition, is the natural enemy of democratic progress. He is making masterly moves in his effort to give England control in the councils of the allied European powers. His opposition to Louis Napoleon's design on Italy is altogether a matter of show, a polite deference to the rival Continental nations. England and France are constantly coming into closer sympathy. We have proof of this in Washington. The French minister is Crampton's friend and confidential adviser. To me it seems evident that the regulations which are harassing American shipping in French ports are due to the Franco-English alliance. If we get into a war with either, the other, if not an active enemy, will be a watchful and cold neutral. The Bonapartes do not forget that the monarchy, not the empire, has- claim to our gratitude; that the best Bourbon Louis was our first friend. We do not forget that in France a Bonaparte is always the heir-at-law of a defunct republic. The first emperor taught us that even in the nineteenth century military conquests are fatal to a republic, that a Cæsar

may bridge with victories his way to a throne. Louis Napoleon will teach the 'imperial child of France' to distrust even a Western republic; to neglect no occasion to limit its bounds and break its strength. Upon the slightest pretext the emperor would quickly seize the Mexico we so stupidly let go. Mr. Marcy has a difficult problem to solve; but he is doing, colonel, just what you Southerners wish. You cannot expect a diplomatist to settle things with the audacity and rapidity with which an Arkansian cuts his way out of a difficulty?"

The tone expressed a question, and there was a courteous pause for assent. The drawling answer was of itself a slow disclaimer of undue haste.

"Arkansaw diplomacy is a different thing from the civilized article. It don't turn its back on friend or foe. It has learnt one frontier lesson which is worth knowing—that the best way out of a quarrel is never to dodge fighting, and when you do go in be cool but quick. Bowie-knives are good weapons, and mighty reliable at close quarters; but the fellow who has a pair of healthy derringers, and shoots recklessly from his coat-tail pockets without caring for the holes

he makes in the cloth, will lay out his enemy handsomer than a slasher can."

A clear voice, with that distinct enunciation which proves breeding as unmistakably as will the ears and pasterns of a racer, asked:

"Colonel, please tell us something of that fight out in the Indian Territory this spring—the fight where the odds against you were so heavy. I am sure we are all ready to cut politics after a day of constant discussion. This is just the hour for a story like that. It will people the twilight with ghosts."

"Well, we made ghosts of some of them sneaks, and I've been sorry ever since we didn't get the balance. I will tell you of that fight, Charley; for it proves what I was just saying to Mr. Marcy's friend about the good sense of not dodging."

He took a fresh glass of the sparkling Catawba and began:

"I was up in Kansas this spring just after the crops got fairly growing. The trouble there was by ordinary. What with the bother on the Missouri border and watching the Delawares, who were swearing vengeance for the murder of one of their tribe who was shot by a Lawrence mob

just out of Simon-pure deviltry, everything was going to the bad and the corn was 'in the grass.'

"This was hard on me, for I had settled a place up there with Tom Sykes, and had sent up six of my likeliest hands to raise corn enough to run my Arkansaw River plantation. I had left everything flourishing at home. The cotton was safe, so the crop to see to was the corn. As I told you, I found the devil to pay.

"Some wool-stealing thieves, who had been run out of Ohio by the people they were keeping sheep for, had come to Kansas and set up in the business of missionary 'Free-Soilers.' Ask old David Tod about them; he knew the lot.

"Beecher's Church had sent out a cargo of Bibles and Sharpe's rifles as the stock-in-trade of the joint concern. It was to be a Western revival of Puritan ways. If the sinners didn't listen to their way of reading Scripture, what so good as rifles to finish the argument? Not altogether a new method of teaching theology, but effective. The logic of forcible conversion is quite as easy to understand as Mr. Marcy's diplomacy.

"One of the missionary sharp-shooting shep-

herds, a tract-distributing, perambulating Chadband, had been tampering with our hands, and Tom had him chased off the place. A short time after—it was three days before I got there—Tom was shot at from a thicket of undergrowth near the road as he was coming home late in the evening from Lawrence. One bullet went through his arm and three grazed his horse, which luckily sent the racer home in a dead run.

"The neighbors and a *posse* from Lawrence organized a hunt for the murdering thieves. Two days after I reached Tom's place news came that the hunters had struck the trail and were running a hot chase. Tom was doing well, and his brothers and two young fellows from Mississippi were staying with him, so I could safely be spared.

"The hunt was over in the Ozark hills, not much out of the way I had intended to take going home. I had to see a half-breed cattle-trader with whom I had had dealings, who lived on the south bank of the Osage, so I thought to see the catching and hanging of the rascals, and then go down the Osage River to the Arkansaw.

"A trader from Memphis, named Forrest, had come to Tom's the night before I left there. He

had some army contracts, and was on his way from Leavenworth to Fort Gibson. He was a muscular, wiry chap, steady-nerved, and quick, with a straightforward look and a sort of lightning flash of the eye that told of pluck you could depend on in a squall, so I was not sorry my road lay alongside his.

"We two started at daybreak. That evening we met up with the Lawrence *posse* on their way home. They had lost the trail of the wool-stealers, and the Indians over on the hills either couldn't or wouldn't help them find it, so they had given up the chase. A half-breed had told them some story of three men heading for a camp of raiders who had been out in the Sioux country, but they thought he was lying.

"We camped together that night. The next day the *posse* started for Lawrence. I went on to the Osage with Forrest. We crossed to the south bank, saw my cattle-dealer, and then made for Fort Gibson.

"The evening we got to the ford, a few miles above Fort Gibson, it was already dark. The wind was shifting and heavy clouds were sweeping up from the West. My horse had gone dead lame and Forrest felt a chill coming on. He

had had the 'shakes' all spring. Taken by and large, we were in a bad fix; and you may be sure we were not sorry when we saw the light from a cabin near the bridle-path we had struck at the ford.

"As we turned a corner into a narrow lane a hill loomed up above the cabin, and lights were shining from the windows of a big house on the hill-top. The cabin-door was open, and a blazing pine knot lit the room and the porch, where a little girl was trying to see who was 'helloing' in the dark. My horse was so dead beat I had got off and was leading him; so I waited in the path while Forrest rode up to the fence and asked, 'Can we stay here all night? I have a chill coming on, and my friend's horse is too lame to go on to Fort Gibson.' An Indian had come out and stood by the child. Inside I could see a huge fellow stumping around upon crutches.

"I thought it one of the half-breed settlements so common near the forts; but the child's first word—and she was the only speaker—contradicted that notion. She answered Forrest in a confounded sight better English than I speak, and she had the strangest, queerest, prettiest manner, so ladylike in modesty, so soldierlike in frank-

ness, that it set me grinning out in the dark at the effect upon Forrest. He had taken off his hat and was holding it in his hand, utterly unconscious of himself or of anything but her. Mr. Marcy's friend talks about the 'imperial child of France.' I tell you the child standing on that rough cabin porch in the blaze of the yellow lightwood looked and talked like she might have been a child of Julius Cæsar. She said her 'father was not at home, but that Bouie's Hill was always open to neighbor or stranger'; that we were 'welcome.' Then to the Indian: 'Open the gate, my chief, and please call Mead to take the horses; Pike will see what can be done for the lame one. If you will come with me, gentlemen, I will show you the path up the hill. Good-night, Pike; good-night, my chief.' After giving her hand to each she led the way up and into a large, comfortable room, where we found two ladies and three children.

"Our little hostess introduced us to 'my stepmother, Mrs. Leszinksky, and my friend Mrs. Carson.' The stepmother was a pale, delicate woman of mixed blood. Mrs. Carson was a pure Seminole. There seemed to be no great love between the stepmother and our little princess;

yet it could not have been prejudice against the Indian blood of the stepmother, for no feeling could have been stronger than the child's friendship for Mrs. Carson and the chief, as you will see.

"From the moment she spoke to us on the porch of the cabin we were in love with our princess. She had bewitched Forrest, and evidently her high mightiness had taken to him.

"Forrest's chill and my lame horse kept us two days at Bouie's Hill. Captain Carson had come, and with him a scout—a rough border fellow, but a famous good fighter, much made of by all at Bouie's Hill, and a special favorite of our princess. He told us the baby adventures of the gracious little lady he called 'Capin Rue'; how she was captured by the Indians, and saved from death and restored to her family by the 'Big Chief.'

"The third night, Charley," and the speaker nodded at the gentleman who had asked for the story, "the night before we were to start on to Fort Gibson, came the scrimmage of which you wished me to tell you.

"A company of frontier rowdies and roughs, with the usual sprinkling of jail-birds, had been

out on the border of the Territory. The pretence was a reported raid of the Comanches, but the truth was they were hanging and shooting inoffensive, friendly Indians.

"Now, I don't spin in on philanthropy; and I don't believe an Indian is the equal of a white man, or that he is fit to govern the country. I am not ready to accept Doctor Clarendon's gratis prescription; for only a quack in statesmanship would suggest savages as legislators. He had better try his notion in some English annex in Asia or Australia before applying for an American patent. If the savages England has conquered don't take kindly to his pills he might try them on Ireland. Why, the Irish would swallow all the self-government the British ministry could manufacture from now until the millennium.

"But to get back to our mutton. I feel bound to say we have damnably overdone the killing and stealing business in our dealings with the Indian tribes. Believing that, and having a personal feeling of liking for the folks I was staying with, I was ready to put my hide between one particular Indian and a set of thieves and cut-throats.

"It was about two o'clock in the morning when a sound of shot, a rush on the porch, and a shouting in the house wakened me. Forrest was sleeping in the same room. In less time than I can tell it we got into our boots and breeches and were in the hall, revolvers in hand.

"Captain Carson was barring the front door, and some negro fellows were nailing up the windows and the back door of the hall. Under the hall-lamp stood the Indian chief and Stearns, the scout; they were breathing like men who had had a sharp run. Blood was dropping from the scout's arm and running down the side of the chief's face, where a ball had cut an ugly gash. Standing with them in her night-dress and bare feet was our little princess. She was holding the Indian's hand and listening intently to something he was saying. The doors leading to the rooms each side of the long hall were open, and women and children were running hurriedly from room to room.

"Forrest called Stearns and asked, 'What is the matter?' It seemed then, and it seems yet, that somehow I half expected his answer: 'Them scoundrels that's been out a-stealin'

hosses and a-killin' peaceable Injuns are 'round the house and a-swearin' they're going to hang the Big Chief.' I saw the child throw her arms about the Indian and turn to listen as Stearns went on. 'I'd hearn of the devil-servin' gang upon the Osage, and when I waked with the noise of the hosses' feet in the stony lane I thought most like it was them. I knowed thar was a old spite all 'long the frontier agin the Big Chief, so I called him and started with him to the fort. But it was too late; the bloody varmints was all 'round Pike's house. To break through and get here we had to run a reg'lar gauntlet. We couldn't a-got twenty yards if we'd a-kept on to the fort. I saw our on'y chance was a sudden turn up the hill through the orchard, whar they wahn't expectin' us. As 'twas they did cussed poor shootin', or we'd a-never got here alive.'

"I asked 'if he was much hurt.' He said: 'No, it's on'y a skin-cut in my left arm; the Big Chief got the wust of it.' The child looked up at the Indian's face and then ran into the nearest room. As soon as she was gone the chief sat down on the floor, and Stearns lowered his voice as he continued: 'When them villains

called to Capin Carson to give up the Injun and they'd make no more trouble the chief started right out thar. Mrs. Leszinksky told him he'd better go; that 'twould save the lives of the balance. But Capin Rue said, when Capin Carson tried to stop the chief and he would go on, that if he went out thar she would go with him. He knowed and we knowed she'd a done it, for thar was never a real Leszinksky yet that left a friend in trouble. And her mother was the bravest lady that ever set foot on the frontier; but she is in heaven, and this Mrs. Leszinksky is different stock. The chief saw that if he kept on he'd take Capin Rue and the balance of us right into trouble, so he promised her to stay by Capin Carson and obey orders. I'm feared we'll have a bloody fight, sir, before we get through. Thar's nigh on to two hundred o' them hell-hounds. I wouldn't mind the odds if it wahn't for the women and children. I've fit with Capin Carson, and the Big Chief, and Oscar before. I know they'll do all men kin do; and I'm sure we kin count on you two gentlemen. I kin pretty much tell how a man'll fight when I see his mouth shut and his eyes ablaze.' He looked at

Forrest, and so did I; and I knew I saw a man that no odds in a fight and no storm of battle could make quail.

"You may tell me of Berserker madness and the deeds of demigods, but I would back a Western Anglo-American, when he is in a rage at some wrong, against any son of Adam or the gods that ever struck at an enemy.

"The child came back with a sheet she was tearing into strips. Forrest looked at her as Virginius looks in the play when he turns from the judge to his daughter. The red light in his eyes went out in mist, and he helped the child with the deftness of a surgeon and the kindliness of a woman. Together they bound up the chief's cuts and stanched the bleeding.

"The child's courage was as cool as Forrest's. Neither of them seemed to hear the yells and devilish oaths of the demons who were calling for the rendition of the Indian, and threatening fire and sword if he was not given up. Carson was giving orders to the negroes and getting ready for the villains all the time he parleyed with them.

"Oscar had brought me all the weapons in the house, and Stearns and I were cleaning and

loading them as fast as we could. There were four double-barrelled hunting-pieces, that we loaded with buckshot, and three rifles, two of them these new-fangled breech-loaders. Carson and the scout had their revolvers, so had Forrest and I. Besides the shooting-irons there were three sabres and a half-dozen new axes. You see with six fighting men these weapons were equal to an undrilled mob. I would a-felt mighty comfortable if it hadn't a-been for the women and children.

"My only fear was that the murdering thieves would set fire to the house, as they threatened, but Carson seemed sure they would not. He said: 'They knew that would alarm the fort and bring every able-bodied man in the garrison to Bouie's Hill.' Then I asked if we could not signal the fort or send a messenger. The answer was, 'No; that the wind was blowing from the fort, and even the firing was unheard; that Stearns and the Indian would have got through to the fort had that been possible.' To which Stearns added: 'Thar isn't a gap whar a weasel could get past—that is, thar wahn't when me and the Big Chief came up. But if the capin will let me try it alone, I'm 'mighty

willin'. Thar spite seems to be agin nothin' but Injuns; and may be I could get through without thar hurtin' me so I'd be stopped.' Here our princess put in her word. I tell you that child was cooler than I was. She asked Carson if Oscar couldn't go, saying: 'He runs like a deer, and you know Bob is a slow runner. Oscar can clear every fence on the place in a running jump. It's down hill in the start, and he could get to the fort in ten minutes. It is only a mile and a half. Why, *I* could make the distance in fifteen minutes.'

"Oscar was not only willing, but he begged leave to go. Carson again said: 'No; the chances would be a hundred to one that any man leaving the house would be shot the instant he was outside. If Oscar escaped death he would be captured, and we would lose one of our force; and you will soon see we have not a man to spare.'

"The raiders were louder and more violent in their threats. Carson recommenced a parley, and begged them 'to respect the home and the family of a brave officer who was out on the plains in their service.' They yelled back: 'Send out the Indian.' He told them 'the chief

was wounded,' which did not quiet the hell-hounds. . They insisted that they be let finish their work, and they would go; while other voices in the crowd called, 'Hang the white renegade who married Wild Cat's daughter. Hang him and the squaw with her half-breed children!' Then for the first time our princess paled; even her scarlet lips lost their color as she looked at Mrs. Carson, who was standing in one of the bed-room doors, with her two boys beside her. The child started to go to Mrs. Carson; then, turning back, she motioned to the chief, who stooped to hear her whispered words. After a moment's speech she put her arms around his neck and kissed the stern face, which was half covered with bloody bandages. Again she whispered, and it was evident he had yielded to her entreaty and made a reluctant promise. When they parted the child was silently weeping, and the Indian's eyes followed her through a mist of unshed tears.

"By this time our preparations were complete. I think I explained how the house was built. There was a long central hall, from which the rooms opened on each side. Across the entire front of the house was a broad, low-railed piazza.

There was a narrow porch at the back hall-door, which connected with a covered passage-way leading to the kitchen. All of the windows of the house had strong, solid oak shutters; only the large store-room in the end of the house nearest the kitchen had no window. Because of that Carson made it the citadel of defence, and provided for the attack by sending there the women and children. The door of this store-room was exactly opposite the door of the dining-room, in which were gathered the servants of the family. The young negro boys and one old man were given axes with which to defend the windows from assault. Across the hall we had built a barrier, made of all the heavy furniture and the mattresses, which cut off the dining-room and the store-room from the front of the house. At the side next to the dining-room door was a narrow opening in the barricade through which we could pass to the front part of the hall and the rooms that opened there.

"We were fairly ready for the enemy when we heard a rush of running feet and the end of a heavy log came crashing through the panels of the double door which Carson had so securely barred. But for that work the doors would

have gone entirely. As the panels gave way there was an exultant yell, and we could see a moving crowd out in the clear starlight.

"I was in doubt if Carson would be the first to begin the fight; but I was not left long in doubt. I knew he was thinking of the threatened murder of his wife and boys when the low-spoken order was given: 'Fire the rifles at the crowd out in the open space where the light is clear. Sweep the porch with the buckshot. Now—fire!'

"It was a deadly volley. The rifle-balls cut into the crowd, while the guns cleared the porch in front of the shattered door. Five still bodies were lying by the log that had dropped from lifeless hands. There were cries and groans as the stricken mob parted to the right and left, and a few poor wounded wretches crawled away.

"There were fifteen or twenty minutes of almost dead quiet—to us it seemed hours. Mrs. Carson came for her husband: 'Mrs. Leszinksky was in violent hysterics,' and something was whispered in an undertone of 'Rue'—what we could not hear. The Indian and Stearns were in a room to the right of the front door, cautiously peering through a crack in the shut-

ters. Behind the broken panels and the guard of unbroken bars Forrest and I were watching for the enemy.

"Very soon after Carson left us we heard him, in a low, cautious tone, call 'Oscar!'

"Then, after a few more of those long watching minutes, Carson came to us with the worst scared face I ever saw a brave man wear. He said something to Stearns about watching from the windows; and then, pulling the door shut upon the Indian and the scout, that they might not hear, he said to Forrest and me: 'Rue has gone to the fort.' I sprang to the door. Forrest, already there, was wrenching out the broken panels, that we might pass, when Carson begged us to stop and listen. 'Wait but one instant,' he said, 'then we will charge the scoundrels. I must tell you how Rue went, and in what direction we must drive the mob.'

"The story was soon told. Rue had climbed into the garret through an opening from the ceiling of the store-room. Her stepmother and two negro women were in the store-room at the time, but they supposed she had gone to watch from a small window that opened on the roof of the back porch. Mrs. Leszinksky had called to

her to be cautious or some one outside would discover the window; but Rue leaned down and said softly: 'When Uncle Billy comes tell him I have gone'—she still supposed the child meant only to the window. Just then the attack began; and in her fright, with her own child crying in her arms, Mrs. Leszinksky forgot it all until after the firing had ceased and Mrs. Carson, coming from the barricade, asked for Rue. They both called, but there was no answering sound from the garret. Mrs. Carson brought her husband, who climbed into the loft and found the child had gone. Telling us the story, he said: 'The window was open. It is a low, wide sash, completely hidden from sight of any one below by the trellised porch, which is closely covered with vines that are trained over the arched gable of the roof of the house. No one could have seen her on the porch or the roof of the covered passage. But she must have crawled over the roof of the kitchen and gone down the chimney, which is built of sticks and clay, and which, for her light weight, would be a secure footing, at the very moment they made that rush at the front door. They were probably on the back porch directly under the child, and so

neglected to watch the path to the deep ravine. That was why she got through it and over the creek safely—for I think she is safe. From the roof of the porch I saw a flying little figure on the ridge beyond the creek vanish out of the starlight into the shadow of the wood near the fort. To make sure that it was Rue, and that she is safe, Oscar will follow her. I ordered him to wait until we charged here to draw attention to this side of the house; then he can risk crossing the kitchen-roof and dropping into the path. Fortunately, the scoundrels are massed over in the orchard. We will charge them there and draw the eyes of their sentries away from the ravine. Only do not tell Stearns or the Indian that Rue has gone. I could do nothing with either of them. The chief would simply throw his life away. Mrs. Leszinksky's taunt, that to save his life he was risking the family of his benefactor, has stung him past endurance.'

"Carson left two of the young negroes to guard the door, ordering them if attacked to hold it as long as they could. Mrs. Carson and her boys were behind the barricade, guns in hand. Carson went to them for a moment. I saw him kiss the boys and press their mother

to his heart. Then he called Stearns and the chief, and we charged through the door into the crowd massed on the end of the piazza and under the trees near by.

"If you could but have seen Forrest!

"I can never tell you just how we fought that fight.

"First we gave them a volley from rifles and guns. Then we rushed into the thick of the crowd with clubbed weapons.

"You can call it what you like, chance or Providence; but some special power, greater than man's, fought for us and turned the fire of the scoundrels upon each other. For when they were driven down the hill there were over a score of corpses and twice that number of wounded and dying men in the house and on the grounds of Bouie's Hill.

"Our losses were not many, but they were grievous to be borne. A party of the raiders got into the house. The Big Chief and Stearns, watching for the safety of the household and the child they believed there, followed them. We heard cries of rage and defiance, a woman's shriek of agony, and the ring of an Indian war-whoop. Leaving the flying cowards

we were driving before us, we ran back to the house.

"Murder was at work in the hall. We were too late to save, but not to avenge. We had our revolvers and bowie-knives, and we made short work of it.

"But Mrs. Carson was shot through the heart; her youngest boy was lying dead beside her. An old white-haired negro had been brained in the dining-room. There were others with slight wounds. Mrs. Leszinksky had fastened the door of the store-room, and, although safe within it, was shrieking like a madwoman. In her frantic fear for her own child and for herself she had fastened the door and so cut off Mrs. Carson and her boys from their last place of safety. Forrest tried in vain to make her understand that the danger was over.

"I left Carson and his wounded boy with the dead mother and son, and I went to where Stearns was kneeling beside the Indian, who had at least a dozen bullets in his body. Just then I heard a fresh trampling on the porch, and, turning to face the enemy, saw the troopers from the fort as a slight little figure with a wan, grief-stricken face flitted past me in the gray dawn.

"There was a pitiful wail, 'O my chief! my chief!' followed by a child's passionate sobbing, and 'Captain Rue' was clasped in the arms of the Indian, who, struggling to rise, caught her, and, pressing her to his heart, fell back dead."

CHAPTER XV.

"See! on my hands this freshening gore
Writes o'er again its crimson proof!"

THE teller of the story and his audience were gone—all but the unseen listener in the adjoining room, who had put aside his writing when the story was asked for.

During the recital the changes in his countenance would have told to a physiognomist a different story from the one he heard. There was the eagerness of a personal interest in his eyes and the pallor of a white terror on his face.

When the story ended a question was asked, to which he listened with indrawn breath. The question had not been answered; the reply was interrupted by the entrance of new-comers, by complaints of the difficulty in finding quarters, and a general move to the office to interview the genial autocrat who then ruled the fortunes of the "Burnet."

The twilight had closed in dusky shadows

within the deserted committee-room. Outside the lamps of the street were lit; but the servant who had come to light the gas had been sent away by the listener, who wished "the twilight peopled with ghosts."

Hartley turned with a shudder to where the street-jets flickered in broken lines across the balcony, as he remembered the phrase. He dropped into a chair near an open window, and, notwithstanding his effort to master thought, he was haunted by a vague shadow of the past. The ghosts would come. He had neither the courage nor the strength to banish those intangible, outline spectres of the phases through which he had passed in that easy descent to the hell where he now was.

Tangled in the web of his broken combinations, with a burning sense of shame for crime and rage at its defeat, Hartley believed he would far rather have encountered palpable personal ghosts than these dim creations of remorseful fear. Looking back through the vista whence he had come, he could see that he had cheated himself in the game of life.

"Curses were coming home to roost"; wrongs were returning "to plague the inventor."

Fortune had been lavish of gifts; and that he had undervalued the greater and overvalued the less had not been counted against him. The hoarded wealth of his uncle had not come to him before he had learned the power of riches. It had freed him from embarrassments. It had opened to him a door of escape from a profession that was not only distasteful but a constant menace to him. It had brought him ease, luxury, social rank, and a certain influence in politics that he had begun to crave. It had put him upon a plane of material equality with the proud family into which his sister had married. Indirectly it had won him his wife, for it had so placed him that the winning was less difficult.

Up to this point the retroaction of thought had but unveiled the spectres of regret, for thus far it had only uncovered sins that the world holds venial. Of sin in the sight of God, or sin as a wrong to humanity, he was shameless—as in truth most men are.

But the spectres that came after gave Hartley pause. The buckler of his conscience was the esteem of men, and through that buckler Nemesis was about to strike. Again and again he

asked himself: "What do they know? What did they discover at Bouie's Hill?"

With the mention of Bouie's Hill the spectre of Margaret Leszinksky arose. The blue eyes looked into the depths of his soul and saw where the garnered hate had festered into crime. Yes, he hated all the proud Cartarets, most of all the woman who was his wife only in appearance—the wife so needful to his weal; the wife yet held to an outward bondage through the persuasion of his sister. But the thought of his wife had conjured up other spectres—his wife's brother and her father? The boy killed in the hunting-field; surely that was an accident! He had warned Tom that the horse was vicious, was given to mad outbreaks of temper at times. But who would have believed the story of the English dealer, that "the horse would wait and watch for his revenge if the spur was used"? As to Judge Cartaret, the family physician had foretold what might happen from any sudden shock. And the shock had been sudden because he would not listen. "He would have the letter, and would not hear the warning of what was to come. It was his own fault." Then Hartley cursed them all, and cursed himself,

that a quadroon girl should have cost so dear.

The first wrong to Lucy had never troubled him, nor did it now. He did not count the murder of Truth and Innocence a crime. They were mere abstractions, or, at the most, essences of entities that in the reasoning of a sensualist were outside the life or the comprehension of a quadroon. As for Oscar's spoilt life, that was the merest nothing. A qualm there would have been absurd. It was even beneath a jest.

But there was a later wrong to Lucy—an offence that had violated law. In that he had touched crime. "Would it come in judgment against him?" That was the question of his conscience. Would he be found out? The exposure would be awkward—that was all. He felt no remorse for what he regarded as an expedient to which the senseless obstinacy of a woman had forced him. If Lucy had been content to give up his child quietly there would have been no trouble. It had never occurred to him that the woman had right or part in the child. It did not occur to him now that there was any injustice or wrong in taking the child from her. His only anxiety in the matter was whether the legal

offence would be brought home to him. For the child's sake, as well as his own, he hoped the expedient he had adopted would be successful.

The child was a beautiful and ideal likeness of himself; she touched the egoist through his vanity and his self-love. Next to himself he loved the child; so for her sake, almost as much as for his own, he trusted that her mother would be eternally dumb. Before this evening he had felt secure of her silence. But that shadowy threat from Bouie's Hill had unnerved him, had made him so fanciful in his terror that he dreaded all uncovering of the past. Possibly the discovery at Bouie's Hill was a mere nothing—an upspringing of fears started into life by the telling of that story. He resolved to go and meet whatever Fate might bring.

Rising, Hartley looked out into the night, then fell back in his seat shaking with the agony of his apprehensions. He had seen the ghost of Lucy, a pallid, corpse-like ghost, beneath the yellow glare of a street-lamp. From the upturned face of the mother he had robbed he shrank back aghast.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Some who spoke on that summer evening are no longer here to speak or listen. Some who were young then have topped the hill and are descending towards the valley of the shadows. . . . Ah! ghosts of youth, again ye draw near! Old figures glimmer through the cloud. Old songs echo out of the distance."—THACKERAY.

THREE hours later a brilliant assembly had gathered in that perfectly proportioned room which was then the ladies' *salon* of the "Burnet House." This *salon* was on the first floor of an oblong wing which was thrown lengthwise from the south front; thus it formed a right angle with the façade of the main building above the Third Street entrance. The windows opened to the floor upon the balconies on the east side which overhung Vine Street. To the south and west the windows gave upon a broad stone flagging which roofed the shops and offices of the outer basement. On the north two doors led to the main hall, which ran parallel with Third Street until it crossed the first door of entrance to the *salon*. There it was intersected by the smaller hall leading from the Vine Street entrance.

The central chandelier, from which hung in widening circles multitudinous pendants, the side-lights with their flashing reflections in the superb mirrors, illuminated the room, which was the setting of the first scene of the drama that opened in Cincinnati in the summer of 1856. In it were gathered that night an assemblage of actors who were to be famous and prominent figures in that drama.

Near the southwest window, through which our Arkansian colonel and the friend to whom he told that story of Bouie's Hill have just entered, a party of gentlemen are discussing with evident temper the Kansas-Nebraska bill and its sponsor. Above the tallest of the group towers the ambitious young candidate who, sure of the vice-presidency—which he feels within his grasp—is hoping for something more which a fortuitous shake of the political dice-box or a deadlock in the convention may give him. Some over-crafty or over-timid move of the cautious, secretive Buchanan may embroil him with the partisans of Pierce and Douglas, yet leave a clear field for the running of the youngster who is entered under the Buchanan colors. Close to Breckenridge, and talking with him, is a young

politician as yet scarcely known outside of Ohio, although there he is already recognized as a leader of the "Straight-outs." Listen to what he is saying:

"It is speciously framed to deceive the very elect. It will keep the promise to the ear and break it to the sense. It is a cheap bid for the Presidency—"

A voice interrupted:

"I say, Vallandigham, is the Presidency to be underlet to the lowest bidder?"

"Hardly, else Pierce were sure of the nomination, which might suit book-making 'Hards' and stall-fed treasury hacks, but which I trust in the end will not suit you, Butler, or your Massachusetts delegation."

"Oh! I'm easily pleased, but it's devilish hard to please Griswold. He's an obstinate ass and an awkward marplot. Set him to cutting uppers for the Democracy, and he'll cut the three-cornered hole by which the pattern hangs every time. He's a statesman through the saving grace of old Deacon Adams's rule, who put his boy John 'to learning because he hadn't sense enough to be a shoemaker.'"

"But with Pierce out of the way will not Massachusetts go solid for Buchanan?"

"That is as difficult a conundrum as the verdict of a petit jury. It would take the head graduate of a guessing-school to answer your question."

"But they will not go to Douglas?"

"Which, from your face and accent, means—to the devil."

"It would be just that. Douglas is a demagogue, but an able one. I was saying to Breckenridge, That Kansas-Nebraska bill is a two-sided shield with which Douglas will draw to him the Free-Soil deserters from the Democracy, as he has drawn the Southern delegations, who will not believe that he is only leading them to the threshold of a new controversy."

But the Arkansian and his friend are forced back by the incoming adherents of the little Illinoisian, and they cross to a gay party in one of the Vine Street windows.

"Who is that beautiful blonde, Charley, next to Hayne?"

"Julia Dean. Have you never seen her play?"

"No."

"Then see her in *Parthenia*, O uncivilized Arkansian! and you will wish only to be a

savage, and *Ingomar*, that she may crown your cup with flowers and teach you the physiological puzzle, 'two hearts that beat as one.'"

"Does she play as well as Agnes Robertson?"

"No, oh! no, most *Violet*-loving backwoodsman. But you can see with your never-to-be-bespectacled eyes, my sun-gazer, that the divine Julia is divine through right of beauty. She seems Aphrodite's self in the faint, rosy mist of that diaphanous gown."

"I am not sure of the likeness; I never saw the other one. And, come to think of it, none of the old fellows that tell the story say anything of a gown."

"You prosaic, literal, and most commonplace of politicians, not a step nearer shall you go to Julia! Turn this way; now listen attentively to the grandiloquent Toombs." This is what they heard:

"The white is the superior race and the black the inferior; and subordination, with or without law, will be the status of the African in this mixed society. And, therefore, it is the interest of both, and especially of the black race, and of the whole society, that this status should be fixed, controlled, and protected by law."

As the ponderous sentence ended two gentlemen left the circle around the orator and joined the friends. They shook hands cordially with the Arkansian, who presented "Mr. Singleton of Mississippi, Colonel Forsyth of Alabama, my old friend and college chum, the Hon. Charles Grandison."

Fresh salutations, and then, as the newly-met friends exchanged personal inquiries, Grandison looked curiously at the Mobile editor, the leading opinion-maker of the Southern press. Small, well formed, with an almost femininely beautiful face, the shapely head crowned by clustering curls exquisitely and carefully dressed, the famous editor had more of the air and manner of a squire of dames than of one of the uncrowned kings of the press.

Singleton was a very different type of the genus Southerner. There was in his bearing a very apparent mannerism, in which a slight pretentiousness struggled with a naturally joyous and mercurial temperament. But this surface defect would wear off with age and the friction of the file which the world is always ready to furnish. There was substance enough beneath to withstand, and be the better for, the scraping

of the bark. He was sound at the core, sturdy and strong as heart of oak; the peeling off of small vanities would only assist growth; it was not as if a mere fibrous pith was to be exposed to wind and weather.

But this study of Grandison's was not a one-sided peering into flesh to find the quality of spirit. The subjects of his mental scalpel were in their turn taking his measure, and it was evident that the measure pleased. Both were cordial in their readiness to include him in that mystic circle which fences in friends and turns its infinitesimal thorns of resistance against its antipathies. The evidence of the attraction was that Singleton's mannerism succumbed to his temperament, while Forsyth lost the bored air of a drawing-room lounger.

To be perfectly fitted to his vocation the editor must be a many-sided man of letters, with at least one side of the polygon art-receptive, if not art-creative. Being perfectly fitted to his vocation, Forsyth was an artist in the perceptive and appreciative sense. An interpreter of art in the plastic sense he was not, nor could he be; for that the divine fire and the hand of the artisan were lacking.

Through that perceptive and appreciative sense Forsyth saw Grandison. Outline and color I can describe for you as Forsyth saw them. (But the worthlessness of words, the littleness of written letters, oppress and restrain me when I try to spell on this page the outer expression of the qualities which bound and still bind me with "hooks of steel" to the old friend whose likeness was daguerreotyped in my memory in the days of my childhood.) He saw a frank, fair-faced gentleman of the Saxon type which suggests a Roman ancestor, with eyes of that deep blue which we find in the vaulted arch of the sky when we look through the fleecy, sun-driven clouds of morning—a man of grand mien and noble presence.

Singleton and the Arkansian had instantly fallen into talk of their respective delegations, which grew confidential and unconsciously exclusive. Grandison and Forsyth—illuminated by magnetic consciousness—each excused to the other by a look the friend for whom he felt responsible. Each smiled his acceptance of the excuse. Thus, under the glow of a nascent friendship, their talk began—talk that wandered outside of the scene and the topics which were

echoed and re-echoed through the heated air of the political furnace now ablaze in Cincinnati.

There was happy mention of mutual friends—men of letters, artists, art; that last was a road that led to Rome. Then, in wider talk of Italy free their sympathies grew together. They were both enthusiasts. Grandison's enthusiasm was outspoken in eloquent, fiery bursts of feeling; Forsyth's was a lambent flame that flowed from the pen's point in lines of light. So the polished, elegant writer was a willing listener to one of the most rarely eloquent talkers an unripe civilization has ever produced. Such a listener is an inspiration, always putting a conversationalist at his best by a well-timed look of question or of sympathetic assent. The triumph of Cavour's success could not have been more nobly told in the Roman forum by the silver-tongued Cicero than it was in this Western *salon*. Then Forsyth suggested:

"The actual state of Italy is not only dangerous to its neighbors, but dangerous in its bearing upon European alliances."

This brought such a picture of revolutionary Italy that the listener seemed to hear the far-off heart-beat of a throbbing volcano.

Then description was lost in anticipation, and the beautifully modulated voice grew calmly sweet as the speaker wished for Italy "only that constitutional, moderate government which will know how to assuage passion and conserve the principle of development."

A gentleman touched Forsyth: "Sorry to interrupt, but we must leave at once or we shall be late. The ladies are ready, and you know," with a bow to Grandison, "it is dangerous to keep them waiting." And the handsome Alabamian walked to where Governor Brown, of Tennessee, stood beside his stepdaughter and two friends who were waiting for the tardy gallants.

A hand-shake and a promise for the morrow, and again the Arkansian and Grandison slowly passed group after group of ladies and their attendant courtiers, and of politicians and their satellites. In the centre of one such group stands and *poses* the saturnine Benton, too vain to think he is but a foil to the handsome man beside him, whose leonine head and soldierly figure attract universal attention.

"Who is that splendidly handsome fellow, Roane?" asked Grandison.

"From the paint you put on the description I

suppose you mean Price. He is standing there by Benton."

"Yes, standing there. I swear he looks a demigod."

"If you could hear him roar in a battle-field you would swear he was a bull of Bashan. I heard him once, in New Mexico, order a charge, and his voice not only reached the squadron of dragoons two hundred yards away and sent them headlong at the enemy, but so frightened the enemy's cannoneers that the dragoons captured the battery without drawing a sabre. The Mexicans were in full run before our fellows shook themselves to try their saddles."

"Is he not leading the cohorts now for Benton?"

"Yes. Benton caught him young; and Price, for a man of more than ordinary common, and uncommon, sense, is the most stubborn ass alive. You'll see to-morrow how he'll carry Benton's colors into that convention."

A movement of the crowd brought them near the outer edge of a circle which surrounded a group of talkers. The central figure of that group was a queer, homely little woman, gaily-plumaged and bright-eyed, who seemed the

quasi-president of the coterie which had attracted the attention of the friends.

The speaker of the moment was so pronounced in resemblance to the first Napoleon that the likeness could not fail to strike the most careless observer.

"Isn't that Soulé who is speaking to Mrs. Carisbrooke, Charley?" asked the Arkansian.

"Yes. Do you not know him?"

"Never set eyes on him before. But I had heard of the likeness to Bonaparte. It is absolutely wonderful. It is the same figure and pose of the head—the very face, the clear, penetrating eyes that look at you out of David's portrait. Put the coronation robes on him and it would seem a resurrection. He would electrify the old sentimentalists who dream of past glory in the *Hôtel des Invalides.*"

"It is a perfect resemblance, and I fancy the voice must be the same, it is so exquisite in tone, so magnetic in quality. Every inflection, every modulation tells of the orator who, if persuasion fail, will carry his auditors by his own intensity. He hides imperiousness under the guise of enthusiasm, and by seducing the imagination blinds the judgment. If Douglas's de-

feat was not a foregone conclusion Soulé would carry the convention to him; as it is, even Louisiana will finally follow Slidell to Buchanan. But here comes William the saturnine. How are you, Horry?"

"As well as an honest man may be when he breathes the air infected by politicians."

"Is there such contagion in it?"

"It is pestilential, most foul and unnatural; but how does this base world treat you, my Hamlet?"

The new-comer placed his hand with a light, caressing movement upon the shoulder of Grandison.

"'Excellently well, i' faith'; and I am glad you have come out of your tub, O Diogenes! But 'what make you here,' my friend?"

"I am brought by 'the rash humor which my mother gave me'—the inheritance of a grain of Eve's curiosity. I am watching by the death-bed of this republican oligarchy. Do you know, Charley, when this scene is shifted the last act in the drama begins?"

"O reddest of red-republicans! you have come back from France a male Cassandra. You are deceived by the bubble of the caldron that boils

over the fire of the convention. It will settle, my friend, and it will clear itself of the scum. There is such potency in the master ingredients that the poison which ignorance has gathered will be neutralized. You forget, O prophet of evil! that this turmoil of the nation is a recurrent symptom—an ague-fit that shakes the body politic at each Presidential election."

"This time, my optimist, the fit will shake the nation into fragments. There is death in the pot. And senseless quacks will try blood-letting. Every sign proves that the end is near at hand. Even so slight a thing as a woman's opinion leans that way. Listen to what our little lady of 'the hill' is saying to Soulé."

They could hear distinctly the words:

"I believe with you, Mr. Soulé, that if elected Douglas would succeed in harmonizing the contending factions for the time—but, mark you, only for the time. Unfortunately the divisions in the parties are widening into a national division. The untoward contempt of Southern extremists is repaid by hatred that grows more bitter as the North feels the balance of power slipping Southward. A Southerner by birth and a Northerner by residence, I can see both

sides of the shield that is waiting the touch of a hostile lance. In a federation like ours contempt and hatred are deadly qualities. They will kill the unity of the nation, as they have killed the harmony of the States."

A movement in the group revealed the listeners in the outer circle. A wave of the little hand and a glad salutation called them nearer.

"Ah! I see, Mr. Soulé, that you already know my friends. Mr. Grandison thinks me slightly demented on this sectional question; but Mr. Horry will prove to you that there is method in my madness."

Touching the lady's hand as he bowed to Soulé, Horry said: "In plain words, the priestess descends from the tripod and leaves me to unravel the perplexed and mystic meaning of the oracle."

Soulé. "Mrs. Carisbrooke has already proved the soundness of her judgment by her selection of an advocate."

Horry. "I deny the judgment. It was only the sixth sense of a woman—the instinctive tyranny of the sex that chooses the readiest and most unsuspicious victim. Counting on my good-nature, on my ignorance of woman's ha-

bitual and inherent perfidy, she unhesitatingly proceeds to immolate me upon the altar of her vanity. She sacrifices the most devoted of her subjects to a strange god."

The bow to Soulé accented the last words.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Now may Heaven keep me from treacherous allies and need of aid! I have proved nothing to Mr. Soulé except my poverty in friends. I abandon politics to the Furies, and so will you all. A woman comes who will make you forget that I exist. But when the well-beloved Brutus stabs one is content to fall at the feet of a rival. Mr. Horry's defection has driven me to such extremes that I am glad to see my beautiful enemy."

She made place for two ladies who had just entered. The gentlemen rising, she presented them to Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley. "The Carisbrooke" kept the shuttle of conversation flying. While the sparkling current of light talk ripples and flows about Mrs. Hartley I can see the change the last six years have wrought in her.

Slight and stately she was; slender and haughty she is. Beautiful, as her pallid youth promised; but it is a dead, statuesque beauty,

where life and warmth are lacking. Expressionless, except for the sombre light in the dark eyes and the occasional deepening of the faint, downward lines which droop from the corners of the exquisitely curved lips; but faint as they are, the lines are hieroglyphic characters, that tell how the soul of the woman is warped by the indwelling of contempt, which has perverted faith and dislodged love and charity.

Messengers came for Soulé and the Arkansian, calling them to a caucus of the Southern delegates—a summons both were loath to obey. For the prince of conversationalists was talking to intelligent and interested listeners, while the Arkansian was watching, with unconscious betrayal of admiration, a face that held him by the rare charm of perfect beauty.

The deep-set, gray eyes of "The Carisbrooke" were of penetrative quality. As the two gentlemen disappeared through one of the windows which opened on the broad platform above the Third Street entrance, she turned to Mrs. Hartley:

"I acquit you of flirtatious intent, my proud Kate; but nevertheless that poor 'Arkansaw traveller' is pierced through and through. His

indigenous bowie-knife could not have made deeper wounds than have the eyes which were shining so far above him. You cannot help it, my dear. All your scorn goes for naught. Men are such simpletons, and a beautiful face is the touchstone which tries them. The mask of wisdom with which they manage to deceive us falls before the talisman and gives to view the folly of a fool. Those we blindly think the wisest are often only the weakest. Now, Soulé has talked his best this evening, not because I listened understandingly, my dear, but because he looked at you while he talked to me. Could there have been a more pronounced proof of the constitutional tendency of the masculine brain to idiocy?"

The action which accompanied her talk, fitting a gesture to every phrase, gave to Mrs. Carisbrooke's speech a certain indescribable piquancy. All laughed. Even Mrs. Hartley's proud lips unclosed, and as the white teeth flashed the ghost of a lost dimple indented the oval roundness; but the dimple vanished, and the smile lost its sweetness as it fell under the scornful arch of the thin nostrils.

Just then Doctor Carisbrooke came into the

room and joined the group. All looked and spoke a welcome. The smile of his wife transfigured the plain face of the homely woman. With the glowing light of love in it, it had a positive and attractive beauty.

The doctor had a noble head and a sweet, wholesome countenance. I can find no other words which express my meaning so fully. If some carping critic cavil at the expression let him better it. I dare affirm that any lover of truth and good English would say the words "sweet and wholesome" were well chosen had he looked into Doctor Carisbrooke's honest face and met the glance of those penetrative yet kindly eyes. The breadth of the man's humanity made this healer of the body a fit physician of the "mind diseased"; and besides there was in his manner a self-reverence which proved that a pure soul was lodged in a clean body. To get the best that is possible out of the school of life these conditions are imperative.

The wise teacher would have taught a more philosophically practical lesson on the upbuilding of character had he left out the question of precedence and insisted that "cleanliness is the beginning of godliness."

After cordial greetings had been exchanged the doctor, refusing a seat, nodded to his wife.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes, I understand that Jovian signal. It orders a start, an instant leave-taking. It means that I must quit this Eden of budding and growing politicians, this convocation of great and small statesmen, to jog up Vine Street hill behind a pair of balky horses that Carisbrooke's compassion forced him to buy from a brutal expressman. His sympathy is a stream that runs as evenly and full as a millrace for all the animal kingdom—except his wife."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "You are a woman, therefore to be—taken with several grains of salt. You know, my dear, that they are excellent horses. Sometimes they wish to stop on the wayside to reason with you when you are impatient and would have them driven hurriedly up a steep grade. But, like their master, they give up and go on stolidly when reason cannot get a hearing."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Having listened to balky reason, I am ready to try the horses. Our friends have promised to take their luncheon with us to-morrow. After you make your morn-

ing visits you are to bring Mrs. Cartaret and Kate home with you."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "I shall be delighted. The ladies will know to-morrow that you have slandered my bays. Have you left an invitation for Captain Hartley?"

Mr. Grandison. "Horry and I have promised Mrs. Carisbrooke to bring him if he can leave his delegation. We will wait until the last moment that he may come."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "He must come, and my luncheon must not wait. I shall expect you at two o'clock."

Horry. "The impossible shall come to pass at your bidding. You shall eat your luncheon smilingly, madam, 'that good digestion may wait on appetite.'"

CHAPTER XVII.

"What! there's a heart inside me, and I've bought a candle for the Most Holy Virgin before now."

THE little group left the room together. At the foot of the wide staircase near the door "Good-nights" were said to Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley.

Horry and Grandison walked on with the doctor and Mrs. Carisbrooke. Near the door of the reception-room they met two gentlemen. One had lost an arm, and both had that erect military carriage which said plainly, "soldiers." Doctor Carisbrooke's hand was laid on the empty sleeve: "Leszinksky!" "Carisbrooke!" were simultaneous exclamations. Then the doctor shook hands with Leszinksky's companion, and the doctor's distant cousin, Major Leszinksky, and Captain Carson were presented to Mrs. Carisbrooke and the gentlemen standing beside her.

A swarthy, handsome boy, with high cheek-bones, black hair, and flashing eyes, had come

from the reception-room and waited near the officers. The race to which he belonged was so evident, the features so marked, that when Carson introduced him as "my son Stanislaus" there was surprise in every face except Grandison's. He instantly understood that these were two of the actors in the story he had heard of the fight at Bouie's Hill. He thought of the Indian mother and "Captain Rue" as he watched the boy's face and listened to Leszinksky saying:

"It is not only a pleasure to meet you, Carisbrooke; it is a special providence. We have just arrived, and are told that it is impossible for us to have rooms in the 'Burnet.' My daughter is quite ill. She is lying on a sofa in the reception-room. I was going for a physician first, and then to search for quarters. The doctor is found, and I hope you can tell me where we can find a place of rest for the night in this crowded town. But first come and tell me what to do for my child. She has been nervous and ill for some time. Doctor Randall ordered me to come north with her. This afternoon she had a severe chill, and now the fever has made her slightly delirious."

The doctor went into the room with Leszinksky. Carson and his son followed them.

Standing there waiting for their return, Grandison rapidly told Mrs. Carisbrooke of the fight at Bouie's Hill, of Mrs. Carson, and of "Captain Rue." The talker was eloquent, the listener impressionable and quick in sympathy.

When the doctor returned with a hesitating, half-questioning look on his face, his wife anticipated his question:

"Bring these relatives of yours with us. They must come. We have room—or somehow I will make room—for them all. Why, Carisbrooke, I would take Molly out of her bed or turn you into the street, to find shelter for that child. Tell Major Leszinksky—no, you stay here; I will tell them myself."

And she was heard talking to the gentlemen, urging until they could no longer refuse.

Dr. Carisbrooke asked Grandison: "Charley, what bee has stung my wife?"

"Generous sympathy with the heroic."

"Does the army march with the insect always at the front, or is it the special privilege of these two officers?"

For the third time that evening the story was

told, this last time in a quick grouping of general facts. But the large-hearted man understood how and why his wife was so moved. She came back to them with the tears rolling down her cheeks, but she said with a triumphant ring in her voice:

"They will come now, at once. Go out and get a close carriage. You and Major Leszinksky and Lucy can go in that with Rue. I found Lucy waiting in the reception-room for me. She was already attending to the child's wants. She can nurse her. You know how she nursed Molly and how devoted she is to children. She will go in the carriage and hold the child so the jolting will not disturb her. Captain Carson and his son will go with me and the balky bays." She laughed nervously as she brushed aside her tears. In less than twenty minutes Horry and Grandison, having seen the carriages off, were walking eastward on Fourth Street.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"O Christ of the seven wounds, who look'dst through the dark
To the face of thy mother! consider, I pray,
How we common mothers stand desolate."

BEFORE breakfast the doctor visited his young patient. Major Leszinksky was sitting beside his daughter, who seemed to be sleeping quietly. As the doctor touched the slender little hand the child opened her eyes and watched his face as he counted the pulse-beats.

"You do not remember our bringing you here, Rue?" asked the doctor.

"No; are you a doctor?"

"Yes; and I am going to cure you. You are very much better already. My wife will bring you a cup of chocolate and some toast; then, if you feel strong enough to see a visitor, Molly wishes to come."

"Who is Molly?"

"She is my daughter—an only daughter, like yourself."

"I am not papa's only daughter. Steenie is with her mother in St. Louis. I was my mother's

only daughter." There was a tremulous shiver in the sweet, low voice. With one hand smoothing back the clustering curls from the fair, open brow, and the other holding firmly both the restless, nervous little hands, the doctor continued:

"Your father and I are relatives and old friends. I knew him when he was a boy at Mount Hope. The Albemarle Masons were cousins of my mother. You and Molly are far-away cousins. I hope you will be friends. I have spent many happy days at Mount Hope. I loved my kinspeople there dearly. For the sake of those old days I trust you and Molly will care for each other."

"I like you." And the slender fingers clasped the doctor's broad palm. "Bring Molly to see me. I hope I shall—I want to love her. I will if I can. But you know love is free. I shall never try again to love any one. I have tried to love some one because it was right. But it was not right; and now I hate."

"My daughter!"

"Yes, papa, I do. But I shall not say whom. I am hurt, doctor—hurt terribly here." And she slipped one little hand from his clasp and laid it on her breast. "But I am trying to live for

papa's sake and for Steenie's sake—for I do love Steenie. I love her dearly. Papa knows that I do. But Laha and my chief! I cannot forget. O Laha! O my Chief!" And the little frame shook with quick-coming sobs.

Mrs. Carisbrooke, who had come in quietly and was listening to the child, impulsively pushed her husband aside and caught Rue in her arms.

"God bless you, Rue! My darling, darling Rue! Your mother was my friend and playmate—your own mother, my child. For Margaret Cartaret's sake I love her daughter. For her sake will you love me, Rue?"

As the child held back those long, quivering sobs and raised a pale, thin little face to look into Mrs. Carisbrooke's eyes, the doctor was more provoked and angry with his wife than he had ever believed it possible for him to be.

But as Rue's arms were thrown around Mrs. Carisbrooke's neck, and her tears came in a full shower the doctor put his hand in his friend's arm, and they silently left the suffering child to the ministration of that spirit of motherhood which has strayed out of Paradise to dwell in the hearts of the daughters of Eve.

As the gentlemen left the room a wild, scared

face came from between the muslin curtains at the foot of the bed. Tearless, aching eyes gazed a moment at the lady and the child, who were unconscious of the watcher. Then, crouching down, the quadroon whom Mrs. Carisbrooke had called "Lucy" crept through the door of the adjoining room, and, throwing herself upon her face, begged of the Eternal Giver, not life, but death and forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Que scais-je."

DOCTOR CARISBROOKE and Leszinksky found Molly Carisbrooke seated on the steps of the vine-clad porch.

Touched by the thought of the child he had just left, by her grief and comparative loneliness, Doctor Carisbrooke made the most of the distant relationship when he introduced his daughter.

"Major Leszinksky is a connection of ours, Molly. His dark locks have bleached so much sooner than my sandy pow that you scarcely dare 'cousin' him; so he is to be your 'Uncle Stan.'"

There was a tender, compassionate look on the girl's face as she gave her hand to the gentleman thus presented and looked into the deep, mournful eyes that were bent upon her.

"I am very glad to see my Uncle Stan. I hope Rue—my cousin Rue—is better."

"She is much better, my dear. Your good father's skill found quick ways of help, and

your mother's kindness was of equal value. I had flattered myself that I was a tolerable nurse; but your mother and the woman Lucy are graduates of the best school. No one could have cared for my child more tenderly. And now I can see in your eyes, my dear little cousin, the help you will bring Rue. She is suffering, not only from illness, but from a very grievous loss, a sorrow hard for us all to bear, crushing to one so young and so loving. I think, my dear, you will help her to bear it."

"I will do my best, Uncle Stan." And the child just budding into maidenhood, with a modest, blushing grace, turned her cheek to receive the proffered kiss.

Molly had her father's kindly brown eyes and frank, fair face. Fifteen years of age, well grown, with a serious, womanly manner, she seemed utterly unlike that bright butterfly, her mother. But there was a decided though hidden resemblance. There was between mother and daughter a mysterious unity of tastes and ways of thought, a magnetic sympathy in likes and dislikes, that completed the girl's dual nature. In this fortunate child of a perfect marriage there was a harmoniously blended in-

heritance of responsive and appreciative qualities.

Carson and his handsome son came up the shaded country road and entered the gate. The doctor and Leszinksky walked down to meet them as Molly seated herself again upon the steps.

"You are early afoot, Captain Carson," said the doctor. "You should have let this young friend of mine have eight hours' sleep after the fatigue of yesterday."

"He was the offender. He called me at daylight. He wished to see his Uncle Stan and hear news of Rue. After we learned she had rested so quietly and was better we walked to Avondale and arranged to go to Oxford to-day."

"Not to-day; surely you will not leave us so soon?"

"My sister expects us. Delay would alarm her, as she knows Rue has been ill since—since our loss." The frowning brow and the flash of the blue eyes gave angry emphasis to the trembling lines about the grieved mouth. The boy's hand touched his father's, who clasped it firmly as he added: "My leave is nearly ended, and as my son will remain with my sister I wish to see

something of her new home. My sister's husband, Mr. McCormack, is one of the professors in the college, and it is the best I can do for my son to leave him there until he is old enough to enter West Point. He wishes to be a soldier."

All eyes were fastened on the boy. He was looking at Molly. The girl, calmly unconscious of self, or rather with the poise of superior age, reached out her hand, and, drawing the boy to her side, took his cap in one hand and with the other smoothed the tumbled black locks that were shading the dark, flashing eyes. The two officers looked at her and then at each other, and walked together to the gate.

"Whom does that young girl remind you of, Stan?"

"Of Margaret—the same lovely, unselfish nature, bright and sweet and womanly. I wish my namesake was the elder of those two."

"It would be of no use. He would never love her as he does Rue."

"Rue is the elder, and they are like brother and sister."

"I think you mistake the relationship. Rue regards Stan as a younger brother, and now, sorrowing for and with him, she gives him the

affection she gave his mother and Willy. But the boy worships her as a queen absolute. I do not suppose he would ever presume to offer her a more personal love; but it will keep him free. He loves her as I loved her mother."

"And you know, Carson, what that brought. You were her brother, as you have been mine. But I do not know why you should say Stan would presume if he loved Rue. Any gentleman may love a pure and free maiden. If they cared for each other, as lovers do, you know how gladly I would give my daughter to your son. There is no inequality except age. But with Rue's imperious temper that would be a fatal inequality. If she ever marries I think she will marry some one many years her senior. And I am not sure but that would be best. She has reverence for age; and, with her, love will go with reverence. If it should not her life will be ruined. I wish your son was nearer your own age, Carson."

And the solitary arm was thrown over his comrade's shoulder. They smiled sadly in each other's eyes and walked back to the steps. The doctor, who was tying up a climbing rose, began:

"My girl wants to keep your boy, Captain

Carson. The great grief of her life is that she cannot be a soldier. She was at West Point last summer with my sister; and that visit to her aunt, together with the influence of the cadets' buttons, has developed a military mania that threatens to be incurable. Now, this boy of yours looks a born fighter, and her woman's instinct tells her there is material for a hero. So she would fain keep him. Her mother will aid and abet her in her design. You had better yield gracefully and stay two or three days longer. Mrs. Carisbrooke will visit your defection upon me. I pray you stay."

"If I had longer time at my disposal, doctor, I would stay until I feared you were beginning to regret your hospitality. I must go with my son to-day; but, if your invitation hold good until then, I will return here day after to-morrow."

"It holds good for then and for all the future; whenever you can give us a day, or a week, or a month, we shall be glad to have you a guest at 'Rosebank.'"

"Thanks! I shall remind you of that invitation whenever a kindly fortune brings me near

Cincinnati. I hope I may see Mrs. Carisbrooke before we go. I trust she has slept since daybreak. Leszinksky told me that she would stay with Rue all night."

"She had a short sleep. She says she is not at all tired. She is with Rue now. I never knew my wife to tire when either sympathy or regard demanded endurance. She has a wonderful fund of reserved vitality and nervous force; and even better staying qualities than my stolid, solid little Molly, to whom I have neglected to present you."

Molly shook hands with Captain Carson, and then smilingly sank back into her favorite corner with her head leaning against the vine-covered baluster.

The doctor. "This is Molly's reception-room, Captain Carson. She likes the upholstery of vines and the gilding of sunlight. The child of a butterfly, she revels in air and sunshine."

Molly. "I shall tell mamma how you slander her. It would serve you right, papa, if your butterflies borrowed the bee's sting. But time will do us justice. Uncle Stan and Captain Carson, if they stay with us a few days, will see how you snub and ill-treat your womenkind."

The doctor. "A household of victims, upon my word! Would it disturb you too much, you trampled little worm—no, I mean you sun-singed *papillon*—if I ask you to tell me how soon we are likely to get our breakfast?"

Molly. "I am glad there is something you can learn of me, papa. Breakfast is ready and waiting; I made the waffles my own self with my nice freckled hands. I told Samson not to ring the bell; it might disturb Cousin Rue. If you think mamma cannot come I am ready to serve at the coffee-urn."

The doctor. "You are a miraculous golden butterfly. Why, child, you can think! You are the loveliest specimen of the genus *lepidoptera* that was ever alight upon rose or honeysuckle. Let me look closely at your speckled wings, that I may classify you," taking her hands. "And with these you actually fanned common eggs into cates that are fit for a royal table? Come, my friends; with stomach expectant and mind at ease, I can bid you come."

In the breakfast-room they met other guests; for the convention had brought visitors to every private house in Cincinnati.

Breakfast was over, and yet Mrs. Carisbrooke

had not put in an appearance. The gentlemen had gathered in "Molly's reception-room," but Molly herself had gone to visit her new cousin.

Carson's conveyance was driven to the gate and duly packed with his and his son's belongings. The doctor had decided that Rue must not be excited by adieus; so, leaving messages for Mrs. Carisbrooke and the two girls, Carson and the boy went Oxfordwards.

Then the doctor again visited Rue. Meeting Leszinksky as he left the child, he said:

"Go and tell Rue that you are going to ride with me; then leave her with Molly. My wife is sleeping now, but she will soon be with the girls, and you can trust Molly."

Leszinksky found Molly by his daughter's bedside, smiling down upon the child, whose hand she held. There was a faint pink tinge on Rue's pale face, and the eyes had lost their sad mistiness.

"I am going to ride with Doctor Carisbrooke, Rue. I shall leave your cousin Molly as your guardian while I am gone."

"I will take good care of her, Uncle Stan. Papa told me just what I might give her."

As Leszinksky kissed his daughter she whispered.

"I do like Molly, papa; I did not have to try. I am so glad she is my cousin. Good-by, papa. I hope you will have a pleasant ride."

After they had left the house, and the bays were proving that they deserved the doctor's praise, he began abruptly:

"Rue is decidedly better. I think Molly will be the best physician we can call. Companionship and nature will do more for the child than drugs could. How old is Rue?"

"She was thirteen last spring."

"She is a child in years and appearance, but a woman in sorrows and intensity of feeling. Only a child can bring back her childhood and make her forget her griefs. The circle of her sympathy has been too narrow and its personality too intense. Her troubles are so near her that they seem gigantic; we must try to widen her horizon. Hers is a perfect though a delicate organism. She has unflinching self-control and the most exquisitely sensitive nerves: it is the true heroic temperament. This morning, when she told me she was trying to live for your sake, I mentally resolved that with God's blessing she

should live; for I knew she could. With her temperament and her strength of will, what she may choose is a vital question. She has no real physical disorder, but a very decided affectional and moral ailment; she has been most unhealthfully exposed to strong emotions. The cure is a natural, child-like life, where simple likings may happily take the place of her uprooted attachments. Molly's calmness and sweetness of disposition is a restful sedative for her—the best we can give her while her nerves are quivering from this recent wrench. But to be with Molly for any length of time would be a fresh injury. She would make an idol of Molly; and we must keep her from idols. If I considered Molly, for her sake I would beg you to leave Rue with us. She could only do Molly good; and Rue has captured my wife, and I think she could soon hang my scalp at her girdle."

"Nothing could be kinder, Carisbrooke, than your frankness. I am sure you would willingly do all or any one thing that would benefit Rue. Nothing is so valuable to me as your advice. I can see where I have failed to do what was best for my child. She lost so much when she lost her mother that I could not, even for her sake,

force her to further loss. And there was a more sacred consideration. The last promise I made Margaret was never to separate the child from the chief who had sacrificed all that an Indian values to save her from a death of torture."

"I think, Leszinksky, you take to yourself needless blame. I do not think under any circumstances you could have so ruled Rue's life that there would have been no strong emotions, no absorbing interests in it. The moral malady —and it is a malady—is in the blood; she had nothing from her mother except the power of loving absolutely and devotedly. From the long line of Leszinkskys she gathered her imperiousness and her unfaltering adhesion to a friend or a cause. You were modified by the Mason graft, but Rue counts no graft this side of the stern Macdonalds, except that one quality her mother's brooding love gave her. I had a long talk with Carson last night, and I cross-questioned him closely. To study this case and understand my patient I had to make a moral diagnosis of the symptoms shown in her life and character. Knowing the disease, we may find that poisons are curative. Sorrows are sometimes fevers that acclimate the soul to its residence in the flesh.

You and I both believe in a special Providence, and with that belief comes faith in the ministration of sorrow. We do not know why evil exists, but we do know that God brings good out of evil. Rue's present pain may be a safeguard for the future, a training against a time of trouble when neither you nor I could shield her. All that we can do now is to try and teach her to bear adversity as a God-sent trial of obedience."

"Where do you advise me to place her?"

"With some one who is kindly but firm; some one more just than loving. Carson told me you had determined to leave her in Oxford with his sister. What is she like?"

"She is just what you describe, and Rue likes her without being fond of her."

"Then Rue will be in good hands. But there is a husband. Who and what is he?"

"A Calvinist, an Abolitionist, and a fanatic, but honest and sincere. At least so Carson says, and Carson is the best judge of men that I know —that is, when he is unprejudiced. And I assure you that in the beginning he was not prejudiced in Mr. McCormack's favor."

"'Honest and sincere'—that sounds well.

But if he makes his *isms* personal—for instance, should he reflect upon you as a slave-holding fiend, which as a fanatic he might do—he will have a battle with Rue on the moment."

"If he is a kindly man and a man of sense he will not be likely to antagonize a child."

"To be kindly and sensible would be inconsistent with 'Calvinist, Abolitionist, and fanatic.' There is more of the diabolic than the divine in that trinity. My hope is in his wife's good qualities. But Rue must stay with us until I see that it is better she should go. You consent, do you not?"

"Yes. I thank you no less for the invitation than I do for the promise to send her to Oxford when you see that it is well she should go. Now that is settled, there is another and a very serious matter upon which I wish to consult you."

"You are not ill, Leszinksky?"

"No; it is not the doctor I wish to consult now, but the man of cool judgment and strict honor."

"Your preamble confuses me. Do I blush visibly?"

"Well, yes, I think you do; there is a modest tinge in your nose."

"Before you begin the 'serious matter' I must make a five minutes' call at this house, where I have a patient. The bays know they are to stop. Will you hold the reins until I return?"

When the doctor came back he turned his horses westward and drove out—the then favorite drive—to the Mill Creek House. Not a word was said until they were on the smooth turnpike. Leszinksky was frowning at his thoughts when the doctor reined in the bays and said:

"Now I can hear what you have to tell me. I have an hour to spare before my next visit."

Leszinksky began abruptly:

"Did Carson tell you anything of the attack upon Bouie's Hill? I do not mean the general facts; of course you know them—I told you those last night when I was telling you the causes of Rue's illness. But did Carson mention a discovery that he believed proved the attack to have been the result of criminal instigation?"

"Yes; and I could have strengthened his belief, but did not. Until last night, when Carson told this story, I had regarded as an unfounded suspicion my brother Robert's idea that the

horse which killed Tom Cartaret was accessory to a murder."

"Robert had such a suspicion?"

"Had and has. I tried to reason him out of the belief—for with him it is more than a suspicion. I did succeed in keeping him from any open expression of his opinion, but I know he is not convinced of Hartley's innocence."

"Then he suspects Hartley of guilt there?"

"I tell you he *believes* it. Hartley bought the horse in England for Tom—an English thoroughbred. He warned Tom that he was ill-tempered and unruly in the hunting-field—a warning that would have little effect with such a rider as Tom Cartaret. It was a splendid animal, easy-gaited, and with wonderful length of stride. Tom could have sold him for three times the price he gave; it was an extraordinarily low price. But that was explained by what Robert learned after Tom's death. Hartley either did not know or did not tell Tom that the brute was viciously revengeful. He had killed a groom in the stable-yard of his owner in Surrey, apparently without provocation. It was afterwards learned that the horse had refused a jump that morning which the

groom, with spur and whip, had forced him to take. He killed Tom Cartaret much the same way and for the same reason, after the hunt was over and he had dismounted in the field."

"Do you believe now that Hartley knew?"

"Frankly, I am somewhat in doubt. In a jury-box I could not conscientiously say, 'Not guilty'; my verdict would be, 'Not proven.' What do you think of the value of the man's testimony who saw Hartley's servant with the mob at Bouie's Hill? Is he a reliable witness?"

"He is an uneducated frontiersman. He was in the First Dragoons and was afterwards a scout with the regiment. He is cool in temper and judgment, slow and cautious—a simple-minded, honest, truthful, upright Christian. He was the bravest soldier, the most courageously devoted and loyal, that I ever knew. He is a cripple for life through a martyrdom he suffered to save the command from an ambush. I could not in any way doubt his word if he was sure of the miscreant's identity. But he has never said he was sure. He saw the fellow only by starlight, and was struck by a resemblance of outline and of voice which puzzled him at the time. When he recollected the resemblance afterwards he

thought it was this 'familiar' of Hartley's. But he has always insisted that there is an uncertainty in his mind as to the identity."

"But that is not all?"

"No; that is Pike's testimony. In the house where Mrs. Carson was killed her youngest son had a rifle-ball and a charge of buckshot sent through him. Stearns, another scout, a cool though desperate fighter, says that as the Big Chief fell beside him one of the attacking party in the house called out, '*He* is finished; now for that little tiger-cat beside the squaw, then our work is done.' That would seem to mean the last of the Indians; but Carson and Stearns both think that Rue was meant—that in the dim light Willy was mistaken for Rue. This is the evidence upon which they found their belief."

Leszinksky took a roughly-scrawled scrap of paper from his pocket-book and gave it to the doctor, who said:

"Carson told me of this. To him it seems conclusive. It is only part of a sentence."

"Yes; a mere fragment—a half-burned slip crushed into a newly-filled pipe. It was found in the pocket of a man the Big Chief killed.

When wounded and dying he sent his hatchet through the fellow's skull. It was Lo-loch-ta-hoo-la's last effort. If this scrap of writing means what Carson thinks, the dying Indian struck down an assailant of the child for whose sake he had given up his tribe and his place in the councils of his people."

The doctor slowly spelled out these words: "kil the injun beefour we kin git at the yung 1 u want oute ov the wai. yu aint gin me enuf munny to git bill 2."

"Who found this?"

"Stearns. He and Carson searched every corpse that was left on the ground. I am sorry to say they killed two men after the troops got there—two who were wounded in the hall. Carson was crazed by his losses. I never knew him vindictive before."

"Not much to be wondered at when a man's wife and child are cruelly murdered. Who was the first to connect these words with intended injury to Rue?"

"Carson. The moment Pike told the story of the two men he saw and the resemblance to Hartley's servant Carson insisted he had found the key to the assault. It had been almost inex-

plicable: to come so near the fort and make such a persistent and determined attack upon a house belonging to an officer, and which they found so strongly guarded. I do not think that mob would have gone such lengths unless some sinister influence urged them on. It was proved afterward that two men had spent money without stint in furnishing whiskey to the crowd. One of these men was identified as the man killed in the hall—the fellow with this note in his pocket."

"Did Pike recognize the dead man as one of those he saw?"

"Not positively. Before he saw the corpse Pike described the person who was with the one he supposed to be Hartley's old servant as 'a black man 'most as big as me. He had a long-barrelled rifle. I could see plain the starlight a-shinin' along the barrel.'"

"Was it a good description of the dead man?"

"One of those descriptions that may be made to fit. The man measured six feet four inches —Pike is over seven feet. His face was blackened. He had only a revolver in his hand and another in his belt; but there was a long rifle in

the hall which might have been his. There is not an iota of positive proof to sustain Carson's belief. He has an old prejudice against Hartley. It would be horrible to ascribe such a crime to an innocent man. You can see how I fear catching the infection of this suspicion. I cannot banish it from my mind, and I dare not entertain it without more direct and convincing evidence."

"Carson tells me that Stearns is a very acute observer, and that Stearns believes as he does."

"Stearns is like Carson in being ready to believe any evil of Hartley. Until last night I have constantly combated Carson's suspicions, but now—"

Apparently stopping for a word, Leszinksky was silent until the doctor, as he turned his horses citywards, suggested:

"You mean that now you see differently?"

"No, not differently in the affair at Bouie's Hill—no absolute difference there—but I now know that Hartley does not stop at crime when he wishes to accomplish his object."

"What! something new since last night?"

"Yes, something new that I learned last night from an inmate of your house."

"Lucy?"

"Yes. Then you know her history?"

"Not one syllable of her past, except a theory deduced from circumstances. She came to us a waif, and she remains a mystery. Four years ago this fall I was one day at St. John's Hospital. I had a private patient there. As I was leaving I met Sister Anthony at the door. We were talking of my patient when a hollow-eyed, spectrally-thin, ill-clad woman staggered up the walk and fell senseless on the steps. Sister Anthony had her brought in, and I stopped to see what could be done. It was a case of exhaustion from fatigue and starvation. The woman had evidently made a long and weary journey on foot. I thought then that she was an escaped slave, but I have since concluded I was mistaken in that. There was something so touching in her patient and hopeless manner that it fairly haunted me. So to ease my anxiety I turned her over to my wife, although I might have known that was a sure method of perpetuating the trouble. Her recovery was slow, and she seemed to suffer from the scenes in the ward, so we brought her to the hill. I think the human interest she soon

took in the family, and grateful appreciation of my wife's care, saved her life. From the day she saw Molly she began to mend. I had studied her closely, and I found there was an apparently incurable mental trouble—not exactly insanity, but a harmless mania. I can only characterize it as an abnormal and passionately intense devotion to children, especially young girls. It was plain to me that Lucy had lost a child who if living would, I imagine, be near Rue's age. That first winter Lucy nursed Molly through a severe and dangerous attack of scarlet fever. I have never known so careful and faithful a nurse. In my wife's slight illnesses she is devoted and untiring. Now I come to the mysterious phase of Lucy. We soon found that any question concerning her past threw her into a state of great excitement, and, if incautiously continued, of agonized terror. So the past was tacitly dropped. We found her perfectly honest and trustworthy. But although unselfishly careless of sacrifice of her personal comfort, she carefully hoarded every cent that was given her. My wife built up a romance on that one inconsistent trait, and imagined that Lucy had some one near to her in great need. The sum grew

rapidly to very fair proportions. In addition to her wages presents of money were made to her. She is an excellent hair-dresser, and my wife found her a *clientèle* at the Burnet House and gave her time to attend these outside engagements. The April after she came to us she suddenly disappeared. She took nothing with her except a small parcel no larger than her ordinary daily package and her savings, which were in a little box Molly had given her. We were much distressed and made all inquiry that seemed prudent. I had not then given up my idea of her being a runaway, and I do not mind telling you that I thought I was harboring one. My wife was sure she had been a slave, brought up by a kind and lovingly careful mistress. Her manner and her affectionateness seemed to prove it. Before our inquiries were of any avail she returned as suddenly as she had disappeared. Only in place of a certain excitement of manner we had noticed just before she left there was a fixed despondency. Question of any kind brought on violent hysteria. We gave up all questioning and left her, as she seemed to prefer, free to come and go as she chose. She gradually settled into her old place in the fami-

ly, but the same history has repeated itself every year. Now tell me what has this to do with Hartley? But wait; here we are in Fourth Street, and at this house I have a call to make and another next door. Will you be good enough to drive on to the Burnet. You will find my coachman waiting there. In three-quarters of an hour I will join you in the reading-room. I am sorry I have to get out here. I acknowledge the thorns of curiosity are pricking me through and through."

Leszinksky drove on as Dr. Carisbrooke had directed. He found the coachman waiting. He went in by the Vine Street door, passed the reception-room, and at the next door he came face to face with Hartley.

CHAPTER XX.

"He waytied after no pompe ne reverence;
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes and his apostles twelve
He taught, and first he folwed them himselve.
. . . . . .
For such lawe as a man giveth another wight
He should himselve usen it by right."

LESZINKSKY, with Hartley in his thoughts, instantly recognized him, which, had he taken it, would have given him an advantage in the interview that was to decide the doubtful question of Hartley's guilt. If the man was innocent of the crime of which he was suspected he would be unconscious of the suspicion. The first instant of consciousness was evidence against him; for, seeing Leszinksky, he turned deathly pale. Recovering by a quick effort, he offered his hand, which offer Leszinksky ignored. Then a crimson flush eclipsed the pallor of Hartley's face.

With such testimony Carson would have essayed to force a confession, for Carson could be

pitiless. But the chivalrous delicacy of Leszinksky's nature unfitted him for the position of accuser. Not that he lacked strength or force of character, but to be a willing accuser one must be brutally aggressive, and that Leszinksky could not be. Physical courage was as much in his blood as its red corpuscles; there was no peculiar merit in its presence, although its absence would have been a defect. The moral courage that combats wrong, like all his moral qualities, even including justice, was set in the tendernesses that are born of human sympathy. There was no guilt so dark that he could not lighten it with pity. His very intolerance of evil made him compassionate of the evil-doer. He had the breadth of charity which prompted Burns to seek excuse and find hope for "cloven Clootie." Knowing Hartley guilty of a lesser crime, he hesitated to accuse him of a greater which had not been, and possibly could not be, proved. In one particular his sense of justice made him Hartley's advocate. He distrusted Carson's suspicions because of Carson's prejudice.

Thus Leszinksky lost the advantage which Hartley's confusion gave him. Yet Hartley was

not altogether the gainer by this loss. The same delicate perceptive sense of right that forbade Leszinksky's belief in unproved guilt also forbade an appearance of trust in the good faith of a man whom he suspected of a great crime, and whom he knew to be guilty of a criminal misdemeanor.

As I have said, Leszinksky refused to touch Hartley's offered hand. The loyal Christian gentleman had no arrogant self-righteousness. There was nothing in his manner that could wound even the sensitiveness of over-conscious vanity. But there was a natural quality in the manhood of the man which constrained him to carry his self-respect as reverently as Douglas carried the heart of Bruce. Hartley withdrew his extended hand. Pulling his hat over his brows until it shaded his face, where the red shame had burnt into a white heat of rage, he turned to go into the room which he had just left when Leszinksky spoke: "Major Hartley, I had intended to seek an interview with you later, but if you are disengaged now I prefer not to wait longer. Will you come with me, or, if you are alone, can I see you here?"

"This room is open at all times to our delega-

tion. If you will wait an instant at the next door I will open it. That is my private room."

"Certainly I will wait."

As Hartley passed through the committee-room Leszinksky saw, among others who were seated around a long table, the two gentlemen to whom Dr. Carisbrooke had introduced him the preceding evening. To avoid the delay which chance encounter with the doctor's friends might cause, and anxious, now that it was begun, to have this explanation, Leszinksky crossed the little space to the next door, which Hartley had indicated as his private room. Leaning against the casing, with his back to the committee-room, he waited admittance. Hartley's request had been that he should wait there; consequently he remained, although he could hear Hartley talking with some one as he walked about the room. The noise in the street, mingled with the voices, made an indistinctness of sound which was not broken except by an occasional word to which the half-unconscious listener attached no meaning. The last few sentences were spoken near the door where he waited, and the words were clear and distinct:

"Go directly to the depot. The train will not

leave before two. Wait inside for me. I will come before you leave."

Leszinksky thought he recognized the voice that answered, "Yes, sir."

At the same moment Hartley threw open the door for Leszinksky to enter; the door leading to the committee-room closed after some one who was leaving.

With a repression of embarrassment that revealed the effort at self-control, Hartley motioned Leszinksky to a seat near the window and turned to lock both doors while saying:

"As you wish to see me alone, I will prevent our being interrupted."

Leszinksky had walked on to the window. With a rapid glance he recognized the man who hurriedly ran down the steps and then up Vine Street. It was the fellow who had been Hartley's servant when he and Leszinksky were in the First Dragoons. The dark, Jewish face was so marked that recognition was easy to one who had seen him daily during his stay with the regiment at Fort Gibson.

Hartley's nervousness made the turning of a refractory lock more difficult. Before he had mastered it and could see his visitor the visitor

was seated in the chair indicated with his back to the window.

With Leszinksky's first word Hartley's expression grew confident. Before the sentence was completed he was still more at ease.

"Major Hartley, when you purchased Lucy from my wife did you not consider yourself pledged to manumit her? Did you not understand that the sale was made to you for one sole reason—that you might give your child and its mother their freedom?"

"Yes, I believe such was the understanding." The question had so completely relieved his fear of a more dangerous subject that he carelessly and half-sneeringly added: "I suppose I paid the full value of the quadroon and the child—possibly something over the market-price."

Leszinksky perfectly comprehended the changed manner. Believing that he was coming near proof that would justify Carson's charge and his own growing suspicion, he resolved to guard himself carefully from accepting the provocation which he was sure was intended. It was plain to him that Hartley wished to find cause of quarrel behind which he could intrench himself, and, in case of need, make it a defence

to more serious accusation. Very calmly he answered:

"Yes, the full value. I think all who assisted at the settlement so regarded it. My wife accepted 'something over the market-price,' because she intended it as a provision for Lucy's future. As you know, we were very poor and could have ill afforded her other assistance; yet neither of us would have consented to her leaving her home without any means of support, burdened as she was with the care of a young child, unless some provision were made. You know how small is the pay of a lieutenant; and you also know that when Miss Cartaret married me, without her guardian's consent, Judge Cartaret had the power to suspend her income until she was twenty-seven years of age. Her income was stopped. The sum was added to the Cartaret estate, to which your wife will succeed in event of my daughter dying unmarried. I know you perfectly understand this; and you also know that all Mrs. Leszinksky could do for Lucy's support was to settle upon her the money for which she was sold to the father of her child. Mr. Page thought it a generous sum that you offered. You remember you named

the sum; you knew that Mr. Page kindly took charge of it and invested it here in Cincinnati for Lucy. In the conversation I had with you—we had but one conversation on the subject, which I think was in Dr. Randall's presence—you were very grateful for what you characterized as a 'generous arrangement'; you afterwards begged Mr. Page to keep it strictly in Lucy's name, for you would 'provide for the child.'

"And I have always done so."

"Yes, I do not doubt that. But have you kept your word to me, your obligation to Lucy? Have you manumitted Lucy?"

"I gave her free papers; they were not registered, but they were valid without registration."

"Did you not hear that the papers were stolen? Did not Lucy tell you of her loss?"

"Yes; but just then there were complications that annoyed me. And the woman was obstinate. I refused to replace her papers unless she would give up the child; I wished to separate the child from her. I was determined my daughter should not be brought up as the child of a quadroon—of a slave. As you observed, she is my child. It was but natural and proper for me to consider what was best for her."

There was evidence of genuine feeling when Hartley spoke of his daughter. In the dirt with which he was trying to cover crime that one shining ray showed the presence of a lost jewel. Knowing Leszinksky as we do, it is easy to know how the discovery touched him.

"I am very ready to admit that it was not only 'natural and proper,' but your imperative duty to consider what was 'best for your daughter.' A daughter is always very dear to a father. There is no tie more purely tender. I can easily believe that it would be intensely, pitifully strong when conscience could find occasion to urge the claim of a nameless daughter. I am glad you spoke of your daughter." There was a wonderful tenderness in the accent of Leszinksky as he said:

"It is an excuse that I did not make for you. I can see how your love for her led you to a wrong, thinking it best for her. But a wrong is never the best; it is always the worst thing we can do for love's sake. It made you forget a right that was more sacred than yours—the right of the mother to her child. In such a case as Lucy's the law is more strictly just than it is to a wife who claims right of motherhood. Law is Scriptural in its dealings with the un-

wedded mother. Like the conscience of the patriarch, it recognizes the supreme right of the mother when it gives Ishmael to Hagar. You have been more pitiless than the law. You forced the child from the arms of the mother; and sent Hagar into the wilderness to die alone. Lest she should cry out in her agony, should show the world the spectacle of her bleeding heart, you *sold her as a slave.*"

The words of the inspired though unconsecrated preacher went straight through the encasing of crime that had dulled the sensibility of conscience. Starting to his feet with the sudden pain, shrinking from the steady light in the clear eyes that seemed to look with a divine compassion into the depths where the hidden guilt was uncovered, Hartley walked the floor, staring upon its sun-flecked surface, as if he found in the tracery of shadows the crimes he had committed and the crimes he had contemplated. Face to face with the evil that had lived in him, that he had nourished into life, the gigantic proportions of the monster he had invoked terrified him. Yet even in his terror he resented in a sort of dull, uninstigative anger the moral height from which Leszinksky's pity descended.

Conviction of guilt had not worked repentance; if it had such repentance would have been short-lived. A sore must slough off its foulness. The processes of nature are slow. They are physical revelations of the divine processes which cleanse and heal a diseased moral nature.

The wise physician has learned the great lesson to wait on nature. The wise moralist will wait, while watching where he may help, for the self-effort which is the first step in the purification of a soul.

The only power which will pierce the dry rock and bring forth a living stream had found Hartley. The most humanly loving teacher of this century has well said: "Charity, having life in itself, is the opposite and destroyer of contempt as well as hatred." The lovely spirit that dwelt in the heart of the great pagan who declared that "nothing human is foreign to me," in keeping Leszinksky from expression or feeling of contempt, killed Hartley's hate. Yet the death of hate did not bring repentance, but remorse—fit companion for the great company of indwelling fiends which were gathered in the guest-chamber of the soul.

Then a tentative question was asked:

"Are you willing to do what is just?—to keep your promise and give Lucy her freedom?"

"Is she in Cincinnati?"

"Yes."

The thought flashed through Hartley's mind that as the ghost he had seen under the lamplight had proved a very real presence, there might also be danger of that other fear clothing itself in flesh and blood. With the mental reiteration of the question he had been pondering through the sleepless hours of the night, "What did they discover at Bouie's Hill?" there grew a belief that his safety in the future might depend on the mercy of the man who, in event of that discovery, would be the prosecutor of certain persons whose conviction would— He dared not pursue his own thought to its last and logical consequence. Yet out of this fear grew defiance.

Pride, which in its higher manifestation is one of the safeguards of a noble nature, is the springe which holds a criminal in the slough of crime. Pride born of self-respect is the guardian of truth. But pride which is the offspring of vanity is an instigator of lies. At its fatal touch Hartley's remorse became exasperative,

and the healing spirit of Repentance which was hovering near sorrowfully took its flight.

"I will manumit Lucy and the deed can be recorded; in addition I will double or quadruple the sum Mrs. Leszinksky settled upon her, if she will release all claim to the child."

"In plain words, you will free the mother if she will consent to sell her child. With such a condition I do not think Lucy will accept her freedom. If she refuses I shall regard it as my duty to insist upon your keeping your promise to the letter. You admit that the manumission of mother and child were the terms of their sale. You admit that you gave Lucy 'free papers,' which were either lost or stolen. I insist that you replace those papers at once and without condition. A trial of the case now and here would be a scandal that I would gladly avoid for your wife's sake. But even to save the soiling of a name allied to the unsullied name of the Cartarets I will not hold my peace in the face of an injustice like this which you have done. I insist upon its instant reparation."

"I make no condition as to Lucy's manumission. I will keep my promise. The offer of settlement was the consideration for her release

of claim to the child. I proposed it to you because Lucy would believe you, if you tell her it is in the interest of the child that I ask her relinquishment of her right."

"I am sure you need not offer her money to repay her for the loss of her child or to tempt her in its interest. You know of what avail were such offers years ago before you dared the high-handed crime of which you force me to speak. When you urged your love for your daughter I thought I saw a human motive for an inhuman wrong. I waited for you to acknowledge that wrong and offer to make what amend might yet be possible to the wronged mother. Had you made such acknowledgment and offered the one reparation she would accept—actual, personal knowledge of her child's well-being—I would have urged to her your love for the child, your wish and your ability to secure its future. Now, I ask you, what excuse have you to make to Lucy, to me, for the crime of selling her? Six years ago you sold her in Baltimore to a trader—for a small sum, it is true, but the condition you made was more to you than money. She was to be taken to the Southwest and sold to some inland planter, who was to be told that she would be

likely to run away. It seems your caution was needful. She did run away. Half insane from the loss of her child and her betrayal into slavery, suspected, watched, strong mother-love gave her the patience to wait for opportunity to escape and the endurance to thread her way through forest and swamp and the more dangerous plantations and villages until she reached Memphis and found the O'Dowds. They assisted her, out of the pitiful pittance of poverty, to reach Cincinnati. She has lived here, not daring to claim the money invested here for her, lest you should know that she had escaped the fate into which you sold her. She is living with the Carisbrookes. I do not think you will care to uncover to Robert Carisbrooke—the administrator of the estate to which your wife is next in succession should disease or some accident, *like the one at Bouie's Hill*, remove my daughter—or to Dr. Carisbrooke the crime you committed when you sold a free woman into slavery. Again I ask, what excuse, what reparation, will you make to Lucy?"

"I will do all you ask." The answer was acquiescent; the look was that of a tiger at bay.

"Very well; I will have the papers prepared

and will see you to-morrow. When this affair is ended I have a caution to give you. I will tell it you to-morrow. Is your wife with you in Cincinnati?"

"Yes; and my sister, Mrs. Cartaret." He slightly accented the "Cartaret." "They are in the house now. Will you see them?"

"I will call on them to-morrow when I bring you the papers. I am as anxious to spare them any knowledge of all this as you could be. The Cartaret name, Margaret's relatives, are very dear to me. I am with my daughter at Dr. Carisbrooke's. If they know the Carisbrookes it will be a needful courtesy for me to call on Judge Cartaret's widow and daughter."

"They do know the Carisbrookes. Mrs. Hartley and Mrs. Cartaret are to take luncheon there to-day."

"Are you coming?"

"No."

"It will probably be best for you to come. I am willing, for the sake of the Cartarets, to help you outlive faults and live down suspicions. It is more necessary than you know for me to accord you public recognition, though I tell you frankly that until I believe such suspicions ut-

terly false and baseless I cannot give my hand to you in friendship."

"I know. 'The hand of Douglas is his own.' A Christian must be scrupulous in his recognitions."

In extremest danger Hartley could not restrain a sneer. And he knew now from that mention of the *accident* at Bouie's Hill that the danger was extreme. Leszinksky's manner and words had given him assurance of Leszinksky's silence, at least until suspicion should be certainty. But then there was also in the words an intimation of danger, of necessity for caution. Because of this intimation, and the assurance it gave of Leszinksky's silence, it was safe to give the rein to rage, which sought outlet in a sneer and a taunt. The answer was simply and calmly spoken: "A loyal clasp of the hand is the seal of friendship. I cannot give such greeting to a man whose honor I doubt. But I promise you a courtesy that will pass current with the world. That much I do for your wife and your sister. Anything more will wait a pending verdict." There was a flash in the gray eyes like sunlight upon steel, and Hartley, warned into a semblance of respectful courtesy, opened the door and bowed out his unwelcome visitor.

CHAPTER XXI.

" Shame is a shadow cast by sin; yet shame
Itself may be a glory and a grace
Refashioning the sin-disfashioned face."

ALL of Mrs. Carisbrooke's guests had arrived punctually except Hartley. Grandison and Horry brought his apology for "an unavoidable detention."

At the luncheon-table there was again mention of his absence and further explanation: "An effort is being made to adjust the claims of the New York rival delegations. Seymour and Tilden have arranged a meeting of the 'Hards' and the 'Softs.' It is hoped a compromise may be effected."

Then, with Mrs. Carisbrooke's questioning as excuse, the conversation drifted, as all conversation did this week in Cincinnati, into politics. Grandison, an optimist, believed "the New York deadlock a mere State quarrel which will be harmonized by the necessity of union in face of the enemy. The Presidential election and its impor-

tance to the Democracy will force the factions to yield to reason."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "As if factions ever regarded reason!"

Horry. "The revolution already begun in the two great parties will not go backward. Look at the bitter fight in the broken fragments of the Whig party. See how they hate each other in the antagonistic positions they have assumed as 'Know-Nothings' and 'Black Republicans.' The small element of decency which is left claims to be a National Union party. In plain words, they are Federalists. They have never cordially surrendered the monarchical principle, and they hate democracy with the bitter hate of —women." A smile and a bow to the hostess made this a challenge, but before it was taken up he continued: "These broken fragments will die in convulsions, but they will be fruitful. The progeny of the dragon's-teeth will fill the land."

Colonel Roane. "What harm can they do a solid democracy? *There* is a Saint George for your dragon."

Horry. "Hear me out, O mildest and suavest of Arkansians! Your solid democracy is a pretence. It is a lion's skin covering not one but

many asses. In the beginning of the republic it was a solid fallacy; now it is a disintegrated delusion."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Mr. Horry, you are talking treason."

Horry. "Which statement, madam, is another proof of the false quality of the principle you worship as divine. In a pure democracy treason cannot exist, either in speech or in the feeling that presupposes speech; for in a pure democracy equality is perfect, and so speech would always be free. Since the reign of our George I., of bumptious temper and doubtful—well, I will not enumerate all his public and private virtues,—since that august personage took his place in history as ruler of a nation made up of sovereign States we have had an oligarchical republic of confederate States, which is not a democracy. Pardon! Madam, I crave your patience; I beg leave to make my saying plain and coherent. We have a Democratic party which is falsely named. It does in a measure represent several dependencies of the democratic principle, but the principle is slowly dying beneath the superimposed fictions. Because of the weight it carries this party is also breaking in twain.

If the break could release and save the imprisoned principle it would be a fortunate issue. But I fear the division will only loosen the evils that are inherent in its organization."

Grandison. "Forgive his raving, Mrs. Carisbrooke; he is mad. He has been bitten by the French Socialists. He blasphemes, but he is not responsible for the blasphemy."

Horry. "They are the words of truth and soberness. I am not mad, most noble Festus. It is simply this world of ours, which is given to lying and to hugging its delusions. There is that within me unsaid which is worse."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Then say it. I had rather know the worst than to be threatened with untold horrors."

Horry. "My dear Madam Eve! You ask for the apple, and you shall have it. I warn you that it is sour and rotten at the core. It is, moreover, a very apple of discord. When it is gathered the gates of paradise will close and a flaming sword will bar the entrance."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It cannot be worse than your threats. Go on."

Horry. "You have spoken, and I live but to obey your sex. If you rue the opening of this

Pandora's box of politics—shake not your curls at me; thou canst not say I did it. I speak at your order, and I bespeak your attention.

"This bad blood in the two great parties would work itself out in boils which would be sore to the touch, but would clear the political system of humors, were it not for the growing discord of States. Unfortunately, sectional animosity is dividing the country with a geographical line which will practically separate us into two distinct communities or peoples. They are already opposed in principles and interests, alienated in feeling, and jealous of supremacy in the federal relation, which has lost its protective and friendly significance. The disruption of the Whig party, which is an accomplished fact, and the disruption of the Democratic party, which is signalled by these rival delegations, uncovers a political North and a political South tired of the compact that united them in a common federal bond, and ready to divide upon the line recognized in the framework of the Constitution."

Grandison. "There is no provision in the Constitution for division of the Union."

Horry. "I beg your pardon, most learned expounder of the law. But there was such a pro-

vision made not only by the convention which formed the Constitution, but by the State conventions which ratified it. The Constitution was in the beginning a compromise between sections. It is now an obsolete treaty between two nations of opposite civilizations. In 1814 the Hartford Convention did not regard the Constitution as a sacred instrument; else why did they cry out for a change in the basis of representation? Neither did Massachusetts regard the Constitution as the ark of liberty. Four times has she threatened secession: first, with reference to the adjustment of the State debts; secondly, on account of the Louisiana purchase; thirdly, because of the war of 1812–14, when, as Jefferson said, 'four of the Eastern States are only attached to the Union like so many inanimate bodies to living men'; fourthly, upon the annexation of Texas, when her Legislature resolved in advance that such annexation would be good cause for the dissolution of the Union."

Grandison. "But you will admit, Horry, that the question of secession was always distasteful to the majority in those States."

Horry. "What was distasteful is not the question. We are looking at what was pro-

posed, to prove how the Constitution was understood. Thus far the conservatism of the country, which always argues against change and for delay, has kept the compact intact. But what will conservatism do against the interest of the majority? There are commercial questions—underlying pocket-questions—in the minds of the agitators which will make them take the most plausible pretext for separation. Possibly the tariff, which is certainly unjust to the South and hurtful to the West, may furnish excuse. Possibly slavery, which just now seems to come uppermost in the quarrel, may be the pretext. Is it true, Roane, that the split in the Missouri delegation is on the slavery question?"

The Arkansian. "I fear it is undeniably true."

Horry. "So; it was the roughs of the Anti-Slavery wing that tried this morning to fight their way into the Convention at the edge of the bowie-knife and the point of the pistol. I wonder what 'Northern indignation' will say to that?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "To quote the *Tribune*, 'Northern indignation is a very uncertain force; it comes in gusts, is powerful for the time, but

soon subsides. The cares of the world and the temptation of the devil consume it after a little.'"

Horry. "And now the devil will strongly tempt them to approve bowie-knives and revolvers."

Grandison. "'Roane, is the Price who led this onset upon the convention the man I saw talking with Benton?'"

Roane. "'Yes, the same 'splendidly handsome fellow.' Has your admiration cooled at the picture of the raider and his following with their bowie-knives and revolvers?'"

Grandison. "Not at all. He looks every inch a soldier, a born leader of men."

Roane. "I should think the *Tribune* would be charmed with this last exploit of Price. It counsels the opponents of slavery to 'get possession of the government'; says the 'President should be a man of iron nerve'; and insists that 'fighting men are wanted as national representatives.' I should think Price would suit them in either capacity."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "I did not think Price an Abolitionist. The Virginia Prices did not even lean toward emancipation."

Roane. "Price is not an Abolitionist, although he is a Bentonite. He has too much common sense. He is too well-principled and honest to fly headlong in the face of facts that confront him every day. A Southerner may be an emancipationist, but if he professes abolitionism he is either a fool or a knave. It is easy to preach philanthropy, but under the stress of adverse circumstance it is rather difficult to practise what one may have preached. Now, I do not hesitate to say that I think slavery the curse of the South. But I am not ready to lose my all, or to ruin the fortunes of my friends and kill the present prosperity of my section, by a sudden and quixotic effort to elevate the African at the expense of the Caucasian. New England did no such thing. She stands now and mocks us with her virtues; but they put money in her pocket. Slavery was unprofitable in the North, and when they decided for emancipation it was so gradual that when the time came for freedom there were comparatively few slaves to profit by the act. They had either died with most frightful rapidity, or they had been sold in the markets of Baltimore and Richmond. You can judge which is the more probable. It is a sig-

nificant fact that during the period of delay—of apprenticeship for freedom—there was a plethora of able-bodied young negroes in the border States' markets. But I am not often tempted into even a remote discussion of a question where my interest and my sentiment—to put it mildly—pull in opposite directions."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Is Benton an emancipationist?"

Roane. "No, madam; he is simply a demagogue. He is coquetting with the Free Soil party. When the alliance is ratified it will be for a consideration. There will be ante-nuptial settlements."

Horry. "Which will assuredly be to Benton's advantage. When the crash comes any Southern renegade who affiliates with the North will put money in his purse."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You will persist in prophecy. Do you see the crash so near?"

Horry. "Yes, madam; the Ides of March will see the incoming of the President we nominate in Cincinnati this week. But after that inauguration—the deluge."

There was a general laugh at the mock-heroic strain in which this was declaimed; then the

talk broke into fragmentary dialogues—into those airy nothings, those brilliant coruscations of complimentary small-talk, that men of sense offer women of brains as current society coin.

The guests were seated in that sensible French fashion which completes the magnetic chain and puts every one at ease. At Mrs. Carisbrooke's right was her friend and ally, the cynically prophetic Horry; at her left the Arkansian, who had laid aside his dialect with his bowie-knife when he quitted the hot, dusty town, where the convention was cooling itself with "cobblers." Opposite these two, in the places of honor beside the doctor, were Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley; next to the last Leszinksky; at Mrs. Cartaret's right was Grandison. These four of the guests who were staying in the house completed the circle to the Arkansian. From Leszinksky to Horry the chain was broken by two empty chairs. But as the fruit was served Molly came in and took the seat next Leszinksky at the end of the table.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O Molly! Molly! to think that you should be the usher of ill-fortune. Why, child, you are the fatal thirteenth at table!"

Doctor Carisbrooke. "Do not let exclamation-points frighten you, my Molly. Though you brought all the Furies in your train, yet are you welcome. Stay where you are and smile down your mother's superstition."

Molly. "Thanks, papa; but I dare not vex the *mater*." And she pushed back her chair and went and stood by her mother. Whereupon Horry turned sidewise and held up a plate heaped with lucent grapes to tempt her.

Horry. "An angel comes to visit us and she is banished! Most cruel of mothers, may she not be fed?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes, when time, place, and numbers are propitious. If you are willing to sacrifice yourself for the general good you can go with Molly to her reception-room under the leaves."

Horry. "With the grapes?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "With all the fruit you care to take or that Molly cares to eat. Having forced that horrid sour apple upon me in the beginning of luncheon, you have grown amiable. Your chronic anger modified, you are ready to feed Molly with sweets."

Horry. "I wonder you did not say that I am

mollified; you are quite capable of such an atrocity. Madam, I leave you to your regrets; I am going to paradise with the angel you refused to entertain."

The banished pair left the dining-room, and the rippling sound of sweet girl-laughter coming from the piazza proved the companionableness of the kindly cynic. The doctor, slightly chafed at the child's dismissal, proposed an adjournment "to the paradise without," and thither they all went with plates and baskets of fruit.

A neighbor was sitting on the steps with Horry and Molly; so, without fear of the fatal number, the feast ended.

Leszinksky, introduced by the doctor as her attendant at table, had taken Mrs. Hartley in to luncheon; there they had been interested and attentive listeners rather than participants in the discursive conversation, rarely speaking to each other, except in the monosyllabic talk of table courtesy.

Leszinksky's chief interest in his beautiful neighbor was through her relationship to the wife, ever beloved, of his youth. He watched for some family trait, some likeness to the woman who had made the only happiness of his

life. But as yet he had seen nothing of Margaret in the cold, proud, beautiful face of her cousin. Out on the steps, at the end of the piazza, where they were seated somewhat apart from the gay party, he tried to interest her, to change the expression of the "icily-regular, dead perfection" of her face by talk of her childhood and her home; he wished to elicit a likeness which he knew would be painfully sweet to him. The result was such a disappointment that the change in his own face could have been read by the veriest tyro that ever tried to decipher a human countenance. A half-restrained sigh gave the change double meaning. For the first time the lovely face softened into sympathetic expression. As he caught the coming light in the large, dark eyes, these words were the first voluntary utterance of the rich, low voice:

"I am not at all like my cousin Margaret. I remember her perfectly. She had the sweetest face I ever saw."

"Ah! I see a likeness now."

There was no intention of compliment. She knew there was not. Yet of all the fine things ever said to her of her beauty nothing had ever so touched her. For the first time in all the long

years since the hardening process had begun, her heart went out in sympathy to the sentiment of love. She made no revolt to the unaccustomed feeling; but, growing more and more tender, the lovely eyes looked at him through tears that gathered slowly and fell unnoticed by her as she bent from the step above him waiting—for nothing that she could have put into words. In truth, the feeling could not have shaped itself into thought. It was simply a heaven-sent contradiction of everything in her life, or rather a divine touch that awakened her from spiritual death. There was no actual thought, but there was a blissful consciousness that love was not all a lie. Then, as consciousness grew fuller and more perfect, she knew, not through the intelligence but through feeling, that love, being love, is truth.

The man there before her, her cousin's husband, had loved her cousin truly. She remembered the sacrifices their love had cost. She also remembered and understood her father's expression of regret for his harshness to "the gentleman who had married his ward." He had said it to her the morning before they heard of Tom's death, the morning before her father's

death: his death—and hers! Yes, she had died then; at least her soul must have shut itself in some inner chamber with her sorrow. Since then she had existed physically and mentally, but she had always known that the motive-spring of life was gone.

Love's first miracle was to take up her thought just where it had stopped that snowy morning at Oakhill, when the sense of her loss so magnified the sense of self that, in her pain and wretchedness, and anger with her husband, all feeling crystallized into hate. Again the phrase struck her: "The gentleman who married my ward." Her father had been speaking of the Leszinkskys and of her husband when he said it. It had come through talk of *that woman*. Thought was growing definite now, and she wondered how she could have been so pitiless to Lucy—how she could have cared. Alas! alas! that Eros and Anteros should both exist, that the false should ever come before the true. She knew already that she had never loved her husband. Now she became conscious of love's worth, and her face crimsoned as she bent over the grape-leaves that she broke from the vine, and with which she tried vainly to hide her tears.

"The gentleman who married—" The words rang in a refrain through her ears. "Well, he is a gentleman." In her thought she said that now. And then thought went on to compare Leszinksky with that other man who, her father had said, "was not a gentleman." The proof of the fitness of the word gentleman came to her, if proof had been needed, when Leszinksky ran up the steps and returned with an umbrella, which he opened and gave her to shield her from the sun and from sight. He waited silently beside her; then, as footsteps sounded on the piazza above, he said:

"A walk will do you good. The lane is cool and shady. Will you come?"

Together they walked down the path, through the gate, and on under the sheltering shade of the trees.

The height of his companion, the fall of her shapely shoulders, the rounded outline of the drooping, oval face indistinctly seen under the shade of the umbrella she carried, a certain dainty, assured grace in her stately carriage—all reminded Leszinksky of Margaret. They had turned from the lane, through which occasional carriages were passing, into a winding country

road, and then into a silent and lonely path along the line of hills which, in the rare openings, gave a distant view of the Ohio with its glassy surface yellowed in the sunlight. Thinking of Margaret, Leszinksky had walked on unconscious of time and distance, hearing no sound in the quiet of the hot summer afternoon save the fluttering of birds in the low boughs that bent over them and the musical rhythm of the steps that kept time together.

Both were quieted and soothed into forgetfulness of the grief and pain that waited their awakening from this dream of green leaves and musical paces by the magical influence that dwells in summer woods, which lives in the fulness of life that pervades glade and dingle, in the fluttering of insect-wings about the fairy moss-stems, in the joy of each tiny wild thing, in the quivering delight of every upcurling tendril, of every blade of grass and bloom of wild-flower that stretched its opening leaves sunward.

A distant shot which echoed through the wood, and the cry of a wounded bird as it fell in the path, broke the charm.

With one impulse both stooped. Leszinksky, yielding the right of succor to his companion,

folded the umbrella she had dropped and waited her pleasure.

Kate (as she softens into womanliness I forget Mrs. Hartley and remember the Kate I found at Oakhill) held the bird in her ungloved hand. Crimson drops had fallen upon her white dress, and there was a crimson stain upon the hand she held out to Leszinksky.

"See how it bleeds, poor little thing! Will it die?"

"It is dying now."

And he took it from her unresistant hand and laid it above the path upon a mossy bank which partly covered the twisted roots of a giant oak. She sat down on the bank and watched the bird; and as the robin, with a fluttering spasm of pain, turned its breast to the sky and was still, her tearful mood came back. Only now with the showery tears there were quick, broken sighs, like the sobbing of a grieved child.

They were near the crossing of a little stream which issued from some spring hidden in the hills. Leszinksky wetted his handkerchief and wiped the stains from her hands, she looking pitifully the while from them to the dead robin. Then he brought her some water in a leafy cup,

saying: "If you will bathe your face you will be better."

Meekly she held out her hands and obeyed him, drying her face with her handkerchief. Then, standing up, she said softly—there was yet a sound of tears in her voice:

"Would you mind burying the poor little thing? I do not wish to leave it here like this."

"It is just what I intended to do with these leaves."

And gently taking up the moss, he made a narrow bed in the curve of a gnarled root, and, wrapping the bird in the wet leaves, he filled in the space and replaced the moss.

She, standing watching and wondering, dividing her pity between the bird and the one-armed gentleman, whose careful, tender movement of leaf and bird amazed her. Years ago she remembered something like this when she and Tom had buried a mocking-bird which Tom had caught and tamed for her. But Tom's tenderness had been for her, not for the bird; his care for that was a concession to her.

But this gentleman—in her thought she constantly so called him—put love into the task he had given himself.

She did not forget what he had said he intended to do with the leaves. That he had not gathered them for her use alone did not altogether please her. But that he had told her frankly of his purpose did please her. She had been living in an atmosphere of lies and hate. That she esteemed tenderness and truth, and the speaker of truth, proved that there was yet in her a healthful moral nature which would recover from the malarial taint, if the conditions were changed.

As Leszinksky finished his task Kate again sat down upon the bank. He asked, "Are you tired?"

"Yes. But it is not for that I am resting here. It is that I wish to tell you something, to ask you something."

She had decided, with the quick impulse of woman, to give him confidence and ask advice. But the manner of her preface was a step out of the false toward the true. She had put aside the courteous deceits of the world bravely, although somewhat rudely, which in a well-bred woman proved what the effort cost. Holding her courage in both hands, she plunged into question:

"Did you not sell Mr. Hartley a woman called Lucy and her child?"

A man of the world would have been astounded at the question. A *roué* would have quickly begun to reckon the chances it might give. The Christian gentleman, with quick sympathy yet truest speech, answered simply:

"She was Margaret's maid. Margaret sold her to Captain Hartley because of her child."

"If the woman had suffered a great wrong, a great injustice, would you not right it, would you not protect her?"

"Certainly. It would be my duty."

"Well, then, it is your duty, and it is also mine, for it was because of me that this wrong was done. I knew of the injustice and was silent. But I did not know until to-day that there was a crime back of the injustice. This morning the woman Lucy was in my room with my maid. I was in Julia's room, which adjoins mine. Julia had gone down to see some visitors. The door was open between the rooms. I heard a woman shriek, and I found Lucy in a strange hysterical fit. Rose was frightened, and she told me she had just given the woman her free papers —papers that Rose had found at Oakhill in a lit-

tle satchel six years ago. Do you understand the crime? Do you understand that Mr. Hartley sold the woman after she lost the free papers he had given her?"

"Yes, I understand. But will you believe what I may tell you?"

"I know you are a gentleman. I will believe anything you say. I am sure a falsehood never soiled your lips. I could not say that for myself." And there was a mournful tone in those last words of that sweet, low voice that made quick way to the heart of the listener.

"On my honor I believe there is excuse for your husband. I do not mean in the act—that was wrong. But we should forgive him for the motive. It was strong and it was human."

"You mean for my sake he did it. You are mistaken in that. He did not sell her for my sake. He simply wished to be rid of her. Please do not speak of him as my husband. There is no longer any real marriage tie between us. There is only a lying appearance. My father was going to take me from him; but my father died, and Tom was dead. I had no one I cared for but Julia, and Julia held me by a promise I

had made before my baby died." And the voice broke.

"You have lost a child; you know what it is to love a child? Then you can learn to excuse Captain Hartley. He sold Lucy because she would not give up her right to his child."

"Yes, I knew it was his child. I knew it when I insisted, as one condition of my return to Oakhill, that Lucy and the child should be sent away."

"You were right in that. You need not blame yourself for that."

"But I knew he separated that mother from her child. I knew he had bought her, and I knew he had sold her. I was *glad* she was punished." She hid her face in her hands.

Leszinksky was silent. With all pity for her he could not excuse her to herself. At last, when the sweet face was suddenly lifted to him, pale with shame and suffering, he prevented her speech by saying:

"But now you are sorry. And to-day, when you found what great injustice Lucy had suffered, you forgave her for pity's sake. To put yourself right with God and your conscience you resolved to defend her. It was not needed;

for I knew the wrong, and Captain Hartley had promised me to right it. To-morrow he was to replace the lost papers. Knowing his motive, and that he was about to repair the wrong, can you not forgive him?"

She stood up before him. She was deathly pale, but the scornful lines were deepening at the corners of the beautiful lips, and there was a set, hard look of resolve that seemed painfully unnatural in the lovely face.

"You do not know what you ask. You cannot judge for me, because you do not know what I have endured. Not for love's sake! Ah! if there had been love I could have forgiven *even that blow.*"

The gentleman standing there listening to her trembled like some one in an ague-fit. He was pale to the very lips. After a moment's pause he said:

"You are the nearest living relative of my daughter; you are Rue's heiress; and so, as your father and your brother are dead, you are my ward. I am as ready to defend you, to right your wrong, as I would be to defend my daughter. I do not believe that the marriage tie may be broken though one suffer a wrong. But sepa-

ration from an evil-doer is righteous and just. If you will accept my protection I offer you a child's place in my household and in my regard."

All her pride was gone. He was looking upon the sweetest, the tenderest, the most loving face that ever met the eyes of man. Her swaying form seemed to bend before him, that she might look upward as one would look at a messenger of the gods.

"I have been separated from Mr. Hartley ever since my father's death. I live with Julia, and so the concealment of our separation is possible. For some reason he seems to value my life and this appearance of marriage. But it is not because of him or of Julia that I refuse your protection. There is no outward, no personal, danger in my life now that demands change. I can and do rule the manner of it as I choose. Yet none the less do I thank you. The memory of this offer, the consciousness that I could, if need were, find a place in your home, in your life, will be both sweet and strengthening in the new life which begins for me from to-day. To you I owe this change which is from within. But, with you, in unlearning hate I might learn another, a more dangerous, lesson.

"The truth should not offend. This truth that I show you is the highest and the purest which has ever come into my life. To be cared for by you, to depend on your protection, to have the humblest place in your regard, is so sweet, even in thought, that I dare not accept it. Will you pardon me if I have said too much? But I could not keep back this new feeling which has come into my life."

The lovely head bent in reverent lowliness, and before he could prevent her she had taken his solitary hand in her soft palms and covered it with kisses. Then as suddenly she turned, and, walking rapidly, led the way out of the wood. In the road he offered his arm, which she accepted; but the silence was unbroken except by the fluttering birds and the regular rhythm of steps in the leafy lane.

BOOK SECOND.

PART SECOND.

"KING STAN."

"Selfless man
And stainless gentleman."

CHAPTER XXII.

"Of all the battayles and encounteryngs that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystory, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of nowe was one of the sorest and best foughten."

(SCENE.—*The breakfast-room of a handsome residence in Washington.* MRS. CARISBROOKE *and* MRS. HARTLEY, *meeting in the hall, enter together.*)

"I TRUST you are somewhat rested, Mrs. Carisbrooke. Julia and I waited up until one o'clock. Then we had a message from Mr. Hartley saying the train was delayed, but that he would wait at the station."

"Yes; he was in the car before I knew the

train had stopped. Molly was so sleepy and I so tired that it was a great relief to hand over checks and parcels to a courteous and able-bodied protector. I have rarely travelled without Carisbrooke. When I do I always have reason to recant every declaration of feminine independence I have ever uttered. I don't mind confessing to you, Kate, that a masterful man is not a person to be despised in a railroad smash."

"Did you have an accident? Mr. Hartley only said a delay."

"An accident! We barely missed running at full speed into a wrecked freight-train. We escaped a collision, but we were detained three hours. What a fright Carisbrooke will have when he hears how his household goddesses were risked! Captain Hartley telegraphed Carisbrooke of our safe arrival. He will probably get the despatch before he sees the morning papers. They are very prompt in the delivery of missives at the New York Hotel."

"Will Molly breakfast with us?"

"No. I promised Molly last night to make her excuses. She is still sleeping. She was out until three o'clock the night before we left West Point, which, with the early start to New York

and the busy day there, axed her strength to nearly its last point of endurance. She sat with apparently calm nerves and a most provokingly placid expression through the first of the three hours at the wreck, and then—she slept. Imagine my temper! Fortunately she was consciously awake when we got here; so I had opportunity to expend my indignation upon her and my commiseration upon my spine before she said 'Good-night,' which was all she said to either indignation or commiseration."

During Mrs. Carisbrooke's monologue Kate had poured the coffee and dismissed the attentive "Yellowplush" to his place in the council of the *Vehmgericht* below stairs.

The two ladies lingered at table. As their talk will tell something of the four years that have passed since we left the chief personages of this drama in Cincinnati, I shall use it to bridge the gap in their history.

Kate. "And I have to make Julia's excuses. She had an engagement to meet a New York yachting party this morning in Alexandria. As they came there for her, she could not well disappoint them. She is going with them to Mount Vernon, but hopes to be back to-morrow. It is

a beautiful morning. Would you like to drive to the Capitol at twelve? The Baltimore Convention has depleted the galleries and they will not be uncomfortably crowded. Or shall we wait until after luncheon? Possibly Molly would like to go."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "My spine is my majority, and it says 'Wait.' And I have chapters to tell you and—unaccountable fact—questions to ask."

Kate. "I shall be delighted to listen to your chapters."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "And you will parry the questions? Well, I am amiable this morning, and will generously give unto you knowledge. It was rather queer, Kate, that the two letters of mine which never reached you were peculiarly news-letters. No reply coming to either, I wrote Robert Carisbrooke to question you and cross-question your post officials—which he did effectually. I believe no letters are missing since then?"

Kate. "None. Possibly the numbering system you adopted charmed the post into regularity. But I have had very little news in the later letters. Why did you not repeat the lost chapters?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It might again have been love's labor lost. They were full, voluminous despatches. I could not duplicate the work. So, as I knew the news would keep, I waited to tell it you."

Kate. "And now, first?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Well, first the news that is of deepest interest and gravest import to the Carisbrookes. In one of the lost letters I hinted, in a sort of prophetic rage, that our very dear and generous friend Major Carson was evincing a certain willingness to be consoled for what I had stupidly believed was his never-to-be-forgotten matrimonial loss."

Kate. "You mean Molly?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "How did you hear it?"

Kate. "I have heard nothing, except, of course, that his son was in Cincinnati. You hinted just now his readiness to be consoled, and knowing that he was often with you, and thinking of the infallible recipe, 'propinquity and opportunity,' I knew it must be Molly."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Natural enough, I admit, for him to think of Molly. But for Molly to accept an old, battered, red-headed, army fossil, whose sole fortune is his pay and his half-

breed heir-apparent, is preposterous. And Carisbrooke! Do you not think Carisbrooke has taken leave of that small modicum of sense and judgment he certainly did display when he married me, to aid and abet his only child in this ruinous folly?"

Kate. "You do not believe it folly, nor do you believe it ruinous to give odds for love's sake."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! ho! A b-e-a-u-ti ful sentiment!—very lovely in the mouth of an heiress who married a New York Crœsus. In an elegant home with superb appointments, talking across a service of solid silver in a breakfast-room where Landseer's hounds look longingly across twenty velveted feet of distance at Beard's squirrels, such a sentiment does you credit, my dear."

Kate. "Better a crust of bread where love is than the splendor of a king where love is not."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The play brightens! Sentiment grows epigrammatically sententious! I am lost in admiration. But, an thou lovest me, Kate, pose your splendor and not your sentiment at Molly. Give me your epigrams, but give her advice coined by judgment."

Kate. "I could say nothing to her, except to warn her to be sure that her love is strong enough to bear sorrow, and true enough to overcome the world and the flesh—"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "—And the devil. A very pretty finish you make of it—calling me names, Kate! I vow—I would like to swear, but, being a coward and a poor, broken-spirited, helpless little woman, I won't—I do vow you are worse than Carisbrooke. That he, being a man, should find Major Carson furnished with attractions to win a girl and heroic virtues to rivet her regard is not utterly absurd. But that you, Kate —you—should see the graces of a gallant or the qualities of a lover in that rugged army fiend is incomprehensible."

Kate. "Am I so destitute of discernment or of heart that I would rate lightly a brave and loyal gentleman?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You were the daughter of the proudest aristocrat in Virginia, and this man is a nobody, a man of the people, a 'mud-sill.' 'I thank thee (senator) for teaching me that word.' You cannot think him a fit match for a gentlewoman. You are the wife of an accomplished man of the world. That your hus-

band is immensely rich is the least of his advantages. He has influence, position. He is a leader in his State, and the trusted representative of its interests in the councils of the nation. When you preach from the text, 'All for love, or the world well lost,' it is simply the fatuous thought of the landsman who stands upon the shore of a dangerous coast and shrouds the warning pharos that he may see the lightning play with the white wings of the storm-driven ships."

Kate. "You mistake: it is the cry of a shipwrecked wretch who was driven by merciless waves where there was no warning light. Mrs. Carisbrooke, save your child from chance of such disaster. It would be better, far better, that she should die now, in her springtime of hope and youth, than that she should give up the true heart of an honest man who has won her love. Ah! my friend, the lines have been cast for you in very pleasant places. You have been sheltered in the heart of a true and faithful guardian. Do not take the bread of life from Molly to give her the gilded apples of Sodom. Believe me, the ashes are bitter, very bitter, when one is an hungered and athirst."

She had risen from the table and had come to the side of her friend. She knelt beside the little lady, and, putting her arms about her, said pleadingly: "You know Dr. Carisbrooke's judgment can be trusted. You will give your Molly where she has given her heart?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O Kate! My beautiful, proud Kate! I did not know. I would not believe—"

Kate. "Please do not say it. I have given you warning. Because of my pride I have hidden a wound. I was taught, by one sent of God, to purify my pride. I am learning the law of duty. But hope is gone, and sometimes resolution fails. The apples are very bitter. You will please not speak your thought, your loving sympathy. I know it is coming in a full current. But I tell you that will hurt. We will simply never speak again of my mistake. But you will be good to Molly. You will not bar her way to happiness."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I will not say her nay, my Kate. It is Carisbrooke's place to decide, not mine. He may take the responsibility on his broad shoulders; I will not assume the red-headed future, Kate." There was a tinge of

bitterness in her laugh which spoilt its natural mirthfulness.

Mrs. Hartley led the way into the cool conservatory, and, seated under the pink boughs of a feathery crape-myrtle, their confidential talk went on.

Kate. "Were not the Leszinkskys with you at West Point?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes. Major Leszinksky has resigned. They are going to live at 'The Cedars.' But I suppose you know all that."

Kate. "No, I had not heard. Julia and I were at Oakhill for a few weeks this spring—the only time we have been out of Washington since our return from Paris in January. I wrote to Rue inviting her to go with us for her Easter holidays, but she declined. She has always declined my invitations. This coolness, which I do not understand, grieves me. I am her nearest relative, and I would like to know her well—to be friends with my cousin Margaret's daughter. Do you know any reason why she should not visit me?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "None why she should not visit *you*."

Kate. "Your accented 'you' implies objection elsewhere."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "There is objection. Rue, who is intolerant of all other control, obeys her father's slightest expression of desire, and her father has very strongly expressed his unwillingness for her to know Captain Hartley or visit his house. Rue told me, at the same time she told me of her father's wish, that she and her father regretted the necessity which separated her from 'her dear cousin Kate.' I believe there is some old difficulty between the Leszinkskys and Captain Hartley—some frontier grudge. Carisbrooke knows it all; but Carisbrooke keeps his friends' secrets in some private corner of his inscrutable understanding. Everybody confides in Carisbrooke, and he locks up the confidences. The atmosphere of our home on the hill is dense with hidden mysteries, and I assure you that I cannot lay eyes on a key to any one of their closets. Skeletons, my dear—skeletons in every one of them. Whatever this affair is, the charming red-topped aspirant for the vacant situation of son-in-law to the Carisbrookes is a very potent influence in the matter. I did not mean to tell you. In fact, Carisbrooke

warned me not to tell it; but you may as well know it all. This swaggering dragoon, this scarlet-poll, whose candidature you have so urged, my dear, declines to visit Molly while she is a visitor here. If I had not promised you before I would have accepted your invitation after I knew that fact. In truth, I would have begged for the invitation. It seems he had some personal collision with Captain Hartley the last day of the convention in Cincinnati in 1856. I never could get the facts from my imperial mystery-keeper; but I know there was talk of a duel. For twenty-four hours there were constant pow-wows in Carisbrooke's sanctum. He and Major Leszinksky at last succeeded in cooling my Hotspur of a son-in-law-that-is-to-be."

Kate. "Are you sure it was Major Carson's own quarrel?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Whose else could it be?"

Kate. "Major Leszinksky's. I know he called Mr. Hartley to account for bad faith in selling a slave Mr. Hartley bought from my cousin Margaret."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Ah! I see, I see. Why, Kate, you have opened one of the closets. The very mystery of all others Carisbrooke has most

closely guarded is no longer a mystery. I think you saw the quadroon Lucy when you were with us. She nursed Rue through that illness of the child's, which was the result of the excitement and exposure in the affair at Bouie's Hill when Mrs. Carson was killed. I remember now that there was a registration of free papers. I know I thought it rather queer that Mr. Horry and Major Leszinksky went with Carisbrooke and Lucy to Mr. Grandison's office. But you say Captain Hartley bought her from your cousin Margaret; then who freed her?"

Kate. "Mr. Hartley."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! Mr. Hartley. It is plain, my Kate, that you do not care to talk of this. But do let me ask one little question: What had the homely Hotspur to do with the matter?"

Kate. "I do not think it was his personal affair. Major Leszinksky possibly insisted that a wrong should be redressed; but Major Carson may have resented the wrong. From what I have heard of him he would be quick to take up his friend's quarrel."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Stanislaus Leszinksky is my ideal of a Christian gentleman; but yet he is

a soldier, and certainly he is a brave man. I do not think he would pass a quarrel to his friend. The law of his life is duty; but if you think he would avert danger from himself through his friend's risk, you simply do not know the man."

Kate. "You misunderstand. I do not doubt Major Leszinksky's courage, neither do I doubt his honor. I am sure there is no danger he would not risk to save a friend. But you remember his friend was not exposed. The duel that was talked of was prevented."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I am glad you properly esteem Stanislaus Leszinksky, and I think you are right. It is more than probable that Hotspur split a hair in search of a quarrel and got snubbed for his pains. An amiable husband he will make Molly!"

Kate. "An excellent one, I am sure. Tender and brave go together."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Hunt in couples, eh? Kate, will you be good enough to tell where you got your liking for the Illinois major? I believe, in the vernacular of his State, that he 'hails' from Illinois."

Kate. "Colonel Roane esteems Major Carson

highly. You should hear him tell the story of Bouie's Hill—of Major Carson's brave defence of the Indian chief; of his devotion to his wife; of his gallantry and daring in coming alone through the Indian country for help when Colonel Kearney's command was cut off and surrounded by enraged savages."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! ho! The Arkansaw Traveller? So he gives certificates of character that pass current with my dainty Kate." And the little lady nodded an emphasis to each word. "He is your authority, my dear?"

Kate. "An authority as to character that I know you will respect."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I acknowledge him a second Daniel come to judgment when it is question of choice between bowie-knives or revolvers. His opinion of a man's ability to take care of himself, or even to help a friend, in an Arkansas free fight, I should receive as an indisputable dictum. But I doubt if he is a Solomon in his judgment of the qualifications of a husband."

Kate. "To sustain the authority I have given I refer you to another fact. Major Carson is Major Leszinksky's dearest friend. My cousin

Margaret loved him as a brother. He is her child's godfather."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Poor Rue! So that is how she came by her temper and her vagaries. No child could have withstood the ill-luck that must come from the infliction of such a godfather. Now I have at last a rational explanation of all Rue's escapades. I am no longer astonished at the battle with the dominie, the flight from Oxford, or her taste for low company."

Kate. "My dear Mrs. Carisbrooke, will you be good enough to tell me what my young cousin has done to justify the indictment you prefer against her?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Why, Kate, you are surely not offended at a jest? You know I love Rue dearly."

Kate. "Not offended, but 'the taste for low company' is rather a strong expression; and, frankly, I will say it did not please me. I do not forget that Rue represents the Cartarets. She is the head of the house. I am jealous for my chieftainess. But I hear she is an impulsive, imperious, little lady. I can fancy she would fight a dominie upon occasion. Please tell me the story." The manner of the speaker softened

the implied rebuke. The last phrase was spoken in the pleading tone of a child who asks the telling of a fairy tale.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "If I tell you the story you will have to confess that the temper of your chieftainess would better become the frontier than 'The Cedars.' Why, Kate, if you are going to do battle with the friends who do not find Rue perfect, and who regret her bringing-up with soldiers and Indians, what will you do when all the starched proprieties of Virginia are drawn up in line against her, as they will be? Ah! I have not forgotten the conventional dames who made my holidays days of torture. I fought my best; but those blue-blooded old tabbies gave me scratches which were not altogether surface-wounds. Scars are hidden, my dear, beneath the pearl-powder and the laces, that were long in healing. Why, even in Ohio, on the hill, where life is free and talk floweth, like the wind, where it listeth, if I laugh aloud—a clear, good, lung-shaking laugh which has noise as well as gayety in it—and then close my eyes, I can yet breathe the odor and hear the rustle of those stiff, lavender-kept ancestral silks, and see the stony glare of the pale-blue, beady eyes of the ghosts

who are sitting a-row in some country-house where the county grandees are gathered. Eugh! I see them now peering through the leaves at me." She caught her friend's arm with so natural an expression of terror that Kate fell into the mime's trap and involuntarily looked around for the spectres Mrs. Carisbrooke had summoned out of the past. While the laugh of the little lady yet lingered in the air Kate repeated the question: "But the battle with the dominie?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Rue fought it fairly, and she routed the enemy, horse, foot, and dragoons. Did you never hear of the encounter?"

Kate. "Never."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It should be told in a recitative epic to the sound of martial music. I am convinced that Rue is possessed, not of seven devils, but of the souls of many ancestors. Well, that day some old Macdonald had escaped from his over-warm cell in the unmentionable realm and had command of the garrison. The dominie in question is the husband of Major Carson's sister."

Kate. "I remember—the McCormacks. She was going to them the summer I saw her in Ohio. They lived in Oxford."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Right, my Œdipa. Person and place you have named correctly. Now that your memory has caught the thread of the labyrinth, it may twist into its meshes and bring before your mind's eye the boyish descendant of the great sachems, who was also going to dwell with the McCormacks. In the Yankee vernacular, do you *seem to see* the wild young Tom-Kitten of the Seminoles?"

Kate. "You mean Major Carson's son—young Stanislaus?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; the grandson of the discrowned chief does bear the name of the kingliest of crowned or uncrowned Leszinkskys. Red-top has a very pretty and pretentious taste in the matter of names."

Kate. "But the story?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You shall have the story. But you see I am growing old. Thought goes a-gadding. To understand the little history a short preface is indispensable. Or do you prefer an appendix with notes? Take your choice. Such small matters are trifles to me. I am extraordinarily clever at either preface or appendix. I am not one of your common historians, ready to cram you with facts. I have taste and

discernment. I know and humor a listener's fancy. Is it preface or appendix?"

Kate. "Preface. I would rather swallow the draught and have done with it."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "For that *un*compliment you shall have a double dose. I have half a mind to commence with the discovery of America. But to spare my breath I shall begin with the Florida war and the genealogy of my step-grandson, who was the son of his mother, who was the daughter of 'Wild-Cat,' who was the son of King Philip, who— *There* is a bar-sinister which I dare not cross."

Kate. "Confess frankly that your knowledge ends there."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "So it ought, my dear. Am I not a Virginian, and do I not remember the tabbies?"

Kate. "The story—please begin the story."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I do, and then you interrupt. Where was I? Oh! King Philip, a most illogical Indian, was the protector and friend of a mixed tribe, called the Black Indians, who were the natural increase of escaped slaves from Georgia, with unnatural accessions of fresh runaways who, when the crops were wearing and

overseers over-cruel, were constantly quitting the plantations on the borders for the isles of the Everglades, where the yams were indigenous and the fishing perpetual. Do you *seem to see* King Philip and his allies?"

Kate. "King Philip, yes; the charge 'most illogical Indian' not proven."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O learned Portia! I wish your father had not been a judge. Beautiful Paduan, I will prove the charge 'most illogical.' This protector of runaways, this Lloyd Garrison of the swamps, with his son Wild-Cat, the silver-tongued Wendell Phillips of the Seminoles who most eloquently denounced the slave-catching government of the United States, were the owners of many black men and women whom they held enslaved. Did their practice and theory correspond, most learned judge? Is it logical to protect runaways and hold slaves, O wise young barrister?"

Kate. "Where did they get their slaves?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I will wager thee my bracelet against thy ring, out of which thou hast befooled thy client's friend, that there is a catch in thy question; but I will answer thee. They did not import the slaves from heathenish

Africa, as good Christians should, but they captured them from white owners."

Kate. "Then they were the spoils of war. These submissive slaves of the Indian's oppressor were the sinews of his strength. Nothing illogical in keeping them to service while assisting the unwilling slave to freedom. Their readiness to strike has prevented the enslavement of the Indian."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I commenced to narrate history. I did not mean to invoke the perturbed spirit of Political Economy. If we are going to do that thing, Kate, we had better commence with the moral effect upon contemporary art of the landing of the Pilgrims. Let us epitomize the abstruse, and do it well and weightily. When a woman goes in for moral results in political science, sex and results are equiponderate."

Kate. "I cry you mercy! Now tell me the story of Rue; we have surely finished with genealogies. What of the dominie?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Keep in mind the facts which I have given you. Also please remember the few family servants Stanislaus Leszinksky inherited from his grandfather, and the hun-

dreds that wait Rue's majority to call her mistress. In short, if you have memorized and digested my preface you will easily perceive the dominie's unfitness to be guardian and preceptor of these imperious and wilful scions of two kingly races—who have been owners of serfs and slaves for numberless generations—when you understand that the Rev. Mr. McCormack is a teacher and a light in the councils of abolitionism."

Kate. "Why did Major Leszinksky choose such a home for my cousin?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. 'There spoke the pride and prejudice of the Cartarets. '*My cousin*'! It was the outcropping of the underlying thought of all Virginians—a race that do not thank God but rather congratulate him that they 'are not as other men.' When I see how these absurdities of the old colonial aristocracy are believed in and perpetuated, how the traditions of race and caste keep the representatives of the old lords paramount uppermost in the State, I know they will finally rule it to its ruin. They are proudly and profoundly ignorant."

Kate (*interrupting*). "You are scourging your own people."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Because they are my own

people I have the right to speak. Truth should be critic as well as counsellor in family discussion. I repeat, these representatives, encased in the ideas of the last century, scorning the progress which they do not understand, are consistently and deliberately ignorant of that which, for their country's good, they most need to know."

Kate. "Was Major Leszinksky's ignorance the foundation of his error in placing Rue with those abolitionists?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It was an error in judgment from diametrically opposite reasoning to that, or rather to the non-reason, of our conservatists."

Kate. "Then progress can be error?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "My dear, Progress is often a fool. The wise statesman and the wise teacher 'hasten slowly.' Stanislaus Leszinksky and my illustrious mystery-keeper—I am glad Carisbrooke was advisory counsel and backer of his cousin's stupid choice—decided that, as Rue had been over-served and too devotedly loved, a change from the tropic to the frigid zone was the only and the specific remedy. You see that was the folly of intemperate progress. It was

the wisdom of men, my dear—to twist a girl out of her natural place and put her where the affections would be stunted and killed. Two Solomons did it, but any Queen of Sheba would have known better. I talked with the child's father and reasoned with the high-priest of my own household. The first urged the necessity of moderating Rue's intensity and the wisdom of teaching her betimes her responsibility for the people committed to her care; the other personage to whom I appealed 'pooh-poohed' my understanding of the matter. Candidly, I was not over-sorry at the upshot. You know a woman likes to have her beliefs justified. But at last we are coming to the battle, my dear."

Kate. "I see that foreshadowed in your eyes, O Bellona!"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Rue, who is Truth in a slender little body, told me the story; so did the dominie when he came in wrath to denounce the children of wrath. You shall have the history, divested of partisan prejudice, as my judicial mind seized and grouped the facts. The first week in June the Indian representative of the red-headed Carsons took up his abode with his father's sister and her husband.

The last of the same month Rue left us for Oxford. When she arrived there the village was in a ferment, and the house of the McCormacks was the centre of the disturbance. Three days before her arrival the dominie had thrashed the grandson of kings, and the young 'Wild-Kitten' had tried his claws and teeth on his uncle-in-law. The wild thing was tied hand and foot; the dominie's eye was in eclipse, and he carried one hand in a sling. Mrs. McCormack was divided in affection, but clear as to duty. (The most detestable of mortals are those duty-dames who are such experts at self-control when Murdstone gets his fling at child-torture.) She made no moan of remonstrance—at least none heard by the compassionate villagers—when the manacled young savage was consigned to the limbo of a hot garret under the roof. Professor Mitre, one of the Oxford dons who had been visiting us, took charge of Rue for the short journey. I had wished to go with the child, but Solomon decided it was better for her to arrive alone at the McCormacks', 'so that she would at once, and naturally, fall into her place in the household.' As it happened, Solomon's decision was a remarkable instance of the twinship of wis-

dom with—well, with the other thing. You remember 'the princess,' as Colonel Roane calls her, has the prettiest little manner ever seen out of a French comedy. There is an unconscious royalty in her imperiously courteous speech, a dignified yet girlish shyness in her carriage, which, united as it is to a certain soldierly directness, almost bluntness, in manner when stating a wish or asking a question—demands and obtains for her instant and deferential attention. After a very short conversation with Mrs. McCormack, and a bare interchange of polite greeting with the dominie, whom she confesses to have disliked at sight, she very naturally soon asked for her 'cousin.' (You know Rue has been brought up to consider herself akin to the 'red-tops.') Mrs. McCormack said she was 'sorry her nephew could not be with them that evening,' which Rue accepted as excuse for some unavoidable absence from the house that she could not understand, but which it might be discourteous to question. As for the boy's welfare or safety she had not the slightest uneasiness. How could she in the house of his father's sister?

"The next morning a slight but courteous in-

quiry was skilfully parried. To do the dominie justice, he made neither excuse nor apology. After breakfast he set himself to his task as instructor, and Rue settled steadily to work without a day's delay. Several days passed and the boy had not appeared. By this time Rue had doubts and preoccupations of her own, and was rather glad little 'Stan' was not there until her doubts should be resolved. Since the first day of her arrival, morning and evening, she heard earnest, agonizing prayer—it was really sincere—for the liberation of the black men and women who were so cruelly held in bondage. Continued repetition fixed these words in the child's memory: 'May Thy trials and plagues come upon these worse than Egyptian task-masters until they let the slave go free! May the plague-spot be cleaned from the nation, and the shedders of innocent blood and the doers of violence be punished!'* Rue's thought had begun to take knowledge of the petitioner's meaning, when one morning, in an unusually fervid heat, the dominie prayed 'that the lesson of God's vengeance might be taught to the slave-owners, if need be, through the death of the

* Quoted from Helper's book.

first-born; that the Union might be broken into fragments and the innocent freed from blood-guiltiness and crime; that the criminal might be scourged away from his sin.' When that prayer ended Rue's question was very direct: 'Are all who own negroes sinners and criminals?' 'Yes,' said the dominie stoutly, 'all.' Rue continued: 'My father owns the servants who belonged to Grandpapa Mason. I will own all the people on my Grandpapa Cartaret's estates. My father told me you would teach me how to care for and protect my black people. He wished me to come North, that I might learn the value of labor and how to educate my laborers for the future in which he hoped they would be free. He said if the people of the North and South knew each other's thoughts and troubles it would teach them to be more charitable. He wished me to love the whole country and to feel that we are one people. He explained this to me over and over, that I might understand. But you have slandered my father in your prayers. You hate us, and you do not really love our black people. If you did you would not pray for evil to come upon us, for they love us. My father prays for them and for me, that I may do them

good. But you—I cannot teach you all my father has taught me, but I will never listen to another of your prayers. They do not make me try to do good, to be better; they only make me angry.' She was leaving the room, after preaching her sermon on charity, when he rudely caught her arm. He hurt the tender flesh—the print of his fingers lasted for days—but she would not cry out at the pain, because she thought it was not intended. Holding her there, he denounced her spirit as 'the spirit of the slave-holder, which should and would be fettered.' The Southerners, he said, were 'ruffians, criminals, outlaws; their treatment of their slaves wicked, monstrous, damnable; an honest man could have no fellowship with them in religion or society.' * This much the child remembered, and he himself repeated it when he was defending what he had said. There were other expressions, descriptive of social crimes and horrors, that fortunately Rue did not understand. From his own showing he raved himself breathless. When he could listen she ordered him to release her, and to be silent in her presence until her father should come and take her from his house. He com-

* Helper's book.

plained that she *ordered* him, and she admitted the *ordering*. I can imagine her steadily courageous and haughtily imperious manner in giving her orders. Then the man must have lost his senses—he says he lost his temper, but I am sure he did not; the most charitable conclusion is that he is demented. He shook her violently, and then as he released her, throwing her from him, her shoulder struck against the low mantelpiece and dislocated her left arm. The dominie sprang forward—he says to catch her from falling; she thought to strike her. Rue is active and quick, and in her life on the frontier has learned to improvise weapons. She caught up the fire-tongs—which, from their effect upon a hard substance, I imagine were excellent steel—and floored the dominie."

Kate. "She was perfectly in the right. I hope she hurt him."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I tell you, my dear, she laid him out. Mrs. McCormack's shrieks brought a servant, who, finding the dominie senseless on the floor and Rue pale and faint on a lounge, rushed out and gave the quiet village an unaccustomed sensation by crying 'Murder!' The little study was soon crowded. Our friend Pro-

fessor Mitre arrived with two of the village doctors. By that time the child's arm was so swollen and painful that Mrs. McCormack's accusations of murderous intention were met by counter-accusations, made by persons who had already heard whisperings of the dominie's cruelty to his wife's nephew, and who now found confirmation of that story in the injury to Rue. When the dominie recovered consciousness he was alone with his wife and one physician. Rue's arm had been set and bandaged, and an indignation meeting was being held in the hall. The universal opinion of the doctor's knock-down was, 'Served him right.' For Rue there was the kindliest and most outspoken sympathy. Then there was talk of the child in the garret. Rue, hearing this, asked quick, anxious questions; and regardless of the cautions of her new-found friends, who begged her to wait the return of the gentleman who had gone to liberate the boy, she ran up the stairs. The little, dark garret was open, and Rue heard Professor Mitre's voice in pitying accents—'My poor boy! poor child! poor child!' The professor had cut the rope that tied the child to the sloping rafters, and which confined him to a small pallet-bed.

His hands were tied together behind his back with a soft but strong cloth bandage. The avoidance of injury in the manner of the bandage had been the dominie's only mercy. The meeting of the children, Rue's heart-broken sobs for the boy's suffering—she had never uttered a complaint when her arm was set—his pitiful manner of looking at her and stroking her bandaged arm, brought the temper of the sympathetic on-lookers to such heat that but for the physician's assurance that the dominie's case was critical he would have been lynched then and there. Mrs. McCormack came into the hall and loyally defended her husband. I tell you, Kate, there are women born to reverence the Murdstones of this world. She insisted that the dominie had acted from a sense of duty in punishing the boy, who was obdurate, and who had constantly fought his uncle, refusing to promise amendment if he was released. She said his Indian blood and his untamed spirit made discipline difficult, but that his father had wished him to be controlled and taught to obey. As to Rue, she had been 'insolent and aggressive'; that her husband had only held the girl's arm when he was speaking to her; and that as soon as he re-

leased it she had caught the tongs and struck him a blow that might yet be fatal. Her story was listened to coldly, but it made impression. The noise quieted and the little assembly dispersed. Professor Mitre waited until all were gone. He then frankly expressed to Mrs. McCormack his disapprobation of the dominie's methods of instruction and his own determination to write to us. He said that as Rue had been sent to Oxford under his protection as escort, it was his duty to let us know at once the very difficult situation of affairs. Mrs. McCormack agreed that it was his duty. He offered to take Rue home with him until her friends came. But Rue refused to leave the boy, and Mrs. McCormack said firmly 'Stan' should not leave the house except with his father. She promised that the children should not be separated or punished in any manner. So the professor was obliged to accept her promise and leave the children. All that day they stayed quietly in Rue's room. Twice the sympathetic servant took them food. In the evening, when the doctor came to see the dominie, he went up to Rue, telling her Mr. McCormack was 'much better, that he would soon be well,' and rearranging the bandages. The next

morning, before breakfast, I heard Molly call her father in such quick, excited tones that I was frightened. Such noise from that placid person made me think the house afire. I rushed to the piazza and found two trembling, feverish, foot-sore children telling the tale I have just told you. They had left the McCormacks at midnight and walked twelve miles to Hamilton. From there they took the first train to the Mill Creek station, where they hired an expressman to bring them to us. Rue's arm was terribly inflamed; she was sick for a week. I never saw such dog-like devotion—the comparison, I assure you, is meant as a compliment—as that the Wild-Kitten showed your chieftainess. Night and day he was seated on the mat at her door. Carisbrooke, who never threatens, actually did say he would send him back to the dominie if he would not go to bed."

Kate. "You see there is good blood in the boy."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Possibly—on the Indian side. I am sure he did not get many good drops from his Aunt McCormack."

Kate. "There is excuse for her: she believed in her husband. You admit that he is an

honest fanatic. But when did you hear his story?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The morning after the children arrived Carisbrooke wrote to the dominie that he intended to keep the children until he heard from their parents. But the dominie came within a week to demand the boy. I believe Carisbrooke would have trusted his promises and given Wild-Kitten up but for me, or rather for what I knew the result would be to Rue. The excitement of her campaign with the Abolition forces had brought back the nervous fever from which she had so lately recovered."

Kate. "It was during the next spring that Major Leszinksky took her to Philadelphia?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; and the young 'Wild-Cat' remained with us. So you see Rue's battle with the dominie brought Red-top about our house at all times and seasons, and was the primal cause of my affliction in this matter of a son-in-law."

Kate. "At last. 'Mary-buds 'gin ope their eyes,' and here is my dear Molly." Then a feminine osculation began which so enraged this historian that he gathered up his notes and abruptly closed the chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"A calm, restful nature, which brings solace and blessing to the poor, worn, tired wayfarers who are all a-quiver with the agony of life's defeat."—OLD MS.

SUCH a nature was Molly's: not beautiful—her mother's daughter could not well have been a beauty—but lovable, and lovely as the mignonette through that subtle radiation, that aroma of quality, which is the greatest as it is also the rarest charm of girlhood. Standing there between two representative women—the beauty and the woman of spirit—Molly's attractiveness was heightened and defined. It was the simple charm of perfect womanliness.

The rose is queen of the garden, the flame of the marigold kindles the fancy of poet and artist, but the mignonette is tenderly gathered and pressed to the lips and heart of the lover.

Kate. "I am so glad to have you here; and so glad for you, my Molly."

Molly. "And I to see you. But why are you glad for me, Cousin Kate?"

Kate. "That 'the prince has come,' and that he is a true prince and lover."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "A fiddlestick for such a prince! A carroty-headed sachem of the Illinois swamps! A girl's wits must have gone wool-gathering when she picks up such a prize."

Molly. "The *mater* does not mean it, Cousin Kate." The girl bent her blushing face to kiss her mother's eyes, saying: "She is the dearest and kindest of mothers; but she is a tempery little woman, and sometimes she forgets that words are bees, which sting when they are roughly or carelessly handled."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I wish you joy of your sachem. Now are you content?"

Molly. "Perfectly content, mamma. The ring of sarcasm in your tone does not deceive me. I hear under it full and true joy-wishes. Cousin Kate will pardon me for thanking you for your tardy congratulation before I thank her for her free-will offering. You make me very happy, mamma." Again the girl bent to her mother, who fondly kissed her and then quietly turned and left the conservatory. Molly, looking after her, said softly: "Poor mamma! That spoken

consent has cost her dear. We shall know how to thank her for it."

The plural was the proof of love's truth and love's strength. But just here the girl and her friend, after their feminine fashion, again fell a-kissing. With that I left the house.

Putting in my pocket the ring of Gyges, I sauntered up Pennsylvania Avenue. Stopping to exchange salutations with the dandies who were posing under the canopied entrance of the National Hotel, I met that prince of humorists and king of good fellows, the greatest popular orator of his time—the Hon. Thomas Corwin, of Ohio. He, using me as a providential and convenient crutch to his carriage, took me to the Capitol. Strange to say, in that seething political period our talk was not of sections nor of parties. It was of Thackeray. This was how it came about. Asking about an acquaintance, the answer was a story of misfortune ending in disgrace. We were both silent for a little while, when Mr. Corwin began: "'It is so easy to be good upon five thousand a year.' In that sentence Becky Sharp gives the pith and substance of human ethics. Poverty is the touchstone of virtue, my friend. If you will watch the

working of Providence you will see that it mostly spares the weakest, the meanest, and the most unscrupulous from touch of the talisman. Those are the three classes that wax fat with riches. In the world's economy they serve base uses. Like their ducats, they are moulded of malleable metal. Now, the human wedges that are made to split difficulties must be wrought of solid iron or fibrous steel. If a bit of rotten old stuff from a wedge that served a rougher generation has been carelessly thrown into the furnace with the new ore, it will crumble to pieces upon the anvil; or if the steel has a flaw in it, it will damage things as it breaks under the hammer. But at least it has been put to the proof. Poor B——! He would have moulded into good and passable pennies; but he had not the stuff in him for a wedge. He would have been very 'good upon five thousand a year.' Did you see Thackeray when he was here?"

"No."

"Ah! what a miss was that—not to have seen the wisest and humanest of living English essayists, and, save Shakespeare, the greatest of living or dead creators and analysts of men and women! And the man himself is so lova-

ble, so full of quips and quirks of humor and pathos, of playfulness and melancholy."

"I thought him the grimmest of cynics."

"I credited you with better judgment. I did not think you would pin your faith upon the shallow evidence which tickles the ears of the groundlings. Study 'Henry Esmond.' Take 'Vanity Fair' itself—that picture which is almost awful in its truth; that Hogarthian panorama of London, which is to say of the world's heart—and you will find that the true artist who sees men and women as they are, gives them at their best, whilst preserving the human likeness. He lets in the sunlight, but he softens the shadows. Why, I tell you I love Becky Sharp, and so did Thackeray."

"I am glad to hear what you say, for of all of the writers of this century I admire him most."

"Which seems to me damnable and faint praise. Why, man, he is the last of the demigods. The nearest approach to him in this century is the Frenchman Balzac. Yet see the difference: both give realistic pictures of life, but one saddens and teaches you to excuse, while the other disgusts and teaches you to contemn, humanity."

"I have never read Balzac."

"Then read 'Père Goriot'; it is the 'King Lear' of French literature. The best recommendation of Balzac that I can give you is Thackeray's admiration for him. He told me he was content with the days when he was too ill to work, for then he could shut the door against bores and read Balzac."

"Did you see much of Thackeray?"

"He visited me at Lebanon. They were weeks of perfect delight to every member of my household. It is the period of time which of all others it would most grieve me to forget."

"It must have been a good time for Thackeray —that is, if an Englishman could understand your humor. But your very face is a comedy; he would surely understand that."

The wry face that was twisted at me then set me in a roar of laughter, which was hushed as well as might be when Mr. Corwin spoke; but even then there was a running cackle that I found it impossible to check as that most mobile of faces gave a rich, humorous meaning and comic emphasis to every word.

"So you have fallen into that fool's trap? I

pledge you my honor I am the most serious man alive. Can I help it if, when I talk words of soberness and wisdom, asses will laugh? I am the most unfortunate of men—plain, blunt, earnest, and yet when I speak men grin at me as if Harlequin had that minute jumped from my throat. It is a curse, sir—I tell you it is a curse. It has lamed my life and killed my ambition. I am constantly taken for a buffoon, sir—a senseless jest-maker. I no sooner appear upon the stump, sir, to instruct my fellow-citizens upon grave questions of public polity, than I find myself face to face with countless grinning apes, who think they see in me an instigator and promoter of their diabolical mirth. I tell you it has killed me, sir. It has killed me politically and judicially. When I argue a point of law the court grins. When I defend a murderer, and paint a picture of remorse and despair which would move an angel to tears, sir, twelve idiots laugh in the jury-box. In the Senate, sir, even in the Senate, when I am only anxious to have my rare and rarely eloquent attempts to save the country listened to and put in print, sir—like the balance of 'em—I tell you, sir, senators roar at me—roar at me."

I could hear no more, for just then we entered the Capitol and passed into the Vice-President's room. A party of ladies and gentlemen were talking with the second citizen of the United States, and, recognizing my people, I left Mr. Corwin dolefully facing a gaunt, tall millionaire from New York, who immediately began boring him with a steamship mail contract. Slipping on my precious ring, I glided into place near Mrs. Carisbrooke, Mrs. Hartley, and Molly. Captain Hartley, who for three years had been a member of the House of Representatives, was in attendance upon Mrs. Carisbrooke. The Arkansian, Colonel Roane—also a member—was the escort of Mrs. Hartley and Molly. Washington is the city of surprises as well as "magnificent distances." When the door-bell of a resident rings it may be a neighbor from next door or a gentleman from Timbuctoo who is announced. "It is the unexpected that always arrives" at the Columbian city. Having learned this truism, Mrs. Hartley was not at all astonished at the sudden appearance of Grandison and Horry while Mr. Breckenridge was cordially welcoming his old friends the Carisbrookes to

Washington. Then there was half an hour of greeting, of mutual inquiry and desultory talk of old friends and of past and coming changes. Grandison had been for two years a resident of Texas. Coming through Cincinnati on his way to Washington, he had brought Horry with him —a willing captive. There were politicians, in and out of place, waiting for a word with Breckenridge. The Vice-President was in a chrysalis state. This week his wings were opening to carry the Presidency, and an astounding number of assistants were making mad rushes from Baltimore, that they might be ready to brush the expanding wings.

Such courtiers soon grow impatient of their lord's delay. Why should he waste speech upon the ears of women while the cringing, fawning parasites wait to begin their chorus? The murmur of their discontent reached him, and with hurried adieux the ambitious aspirant for the first place in the republic rustled his budding wings and flew to listen to the ambassadors from the caucuses—those spokesmen of the people, those democratic high-priests, who have proved to the ages that grand *un*truth: that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

Horry offered his arm to Molly, saying: "Being a youthful and unshackled knight, I dare offer my arm where I have vainly tendered my hand. Possibly, Miss Molly, I may win gratitude for taking you out of danger, though love failed me. When you think I have had time to enumerate my virtues and charms, Mrs. Carisbrooke, you will find us in the library."

Captain Hartley was about to leave his wife and Mrs. Carisbrooke in the rotunda near the library door, with Grandison and Roane, when his sister, Mrs. Cartaret, met them.

It was explained that, the wind being unfavorable, the yachting party had decided to visit the Capitol. They had but just arrived from Alexandria. Some of the party knew Mrs. Carisbrooke; all but two were friends of Mrs. Hartley.

Captain Hartley had a queer look on his face, and Mrs. Cartaret seemed much embarrassed when she introduced the two strangers to her sister-in-law. One was a beautiful young girl, child-like in face, but developed in form to such perfectness that face and figure were sufficiently contradictory to be puzzling in their definition of age. The other was an exceedingly handsome, self-satisfied young dandy, who was introduced

as "my cousin, Mr. Bradnor." The girl's name had been too indistinctly spoken to be heard. Kate looked inquiringly at her sister-in-law, and the name was repeated—"Miss Mai Hilton." The name implied kinship to Mrs. Cartaret's first husband. The second inquiry was spoken: "A relative?"

Mrs. Cartaret. "Yes, a relative."

Mrs. Hartley. "I am glad to welcome a relative of my sister's to Washington. I hope she will persuade you to stay with us, Miss Hilton. We can offer you unusual attraction. Mrs. Carisbrooke and her daughter will help us make your visit pleasant. Before you decide let me introduce you to Molly; I am sure you will then decide in our favor."

Mrs. Hartley was about to lead the way in search of Molly. She had not waited for an answer. She wished first to prepare the girl for acceptance. She saw her sister-in-law's embarrassment and misinterpreted it. She thought it a scruple of Mrs. Cartaret's—a desire not to force an offer of hospitality to a Hilton, to a relative of her first husband. She turned and took the young girl's hand to lead her to the library. Mrs. Carisbrooke and Mrs. Cartaret were to-

gether, but Mrs. Cartaret was evidently only half listening to her companion. Captain Hartley had either forgotten the business which he had urged as an excuse for leaving them, or the presence of the New-Yorkers had determined him to break his engagement. Grandison and Roane were just without the library door, waiting for the ladies. Thus they were in broken groups, but all interest evidently centred upon Mrs. Hartley and her companion.

Mrs. Carisbrooke, conscious of Mrs. Cartaret's absorption, again looked at Miss Hilton, wondering what likeness it was she saw. Suddenly the strangest recollection came to her. As she looked at the full, sensuous beauty of the girl, through some subtle likeness that worked the transformation the pale, worn face, the shrunken, fragile form, of the quadroon Lucy seemed to stand before her. She was so startled at the thought that she looked quickly around, as if in fear of some one reading her thought. She saw Captain Hartley, pale and eager, watching his wife; and the mystery of Mrs. Cartaret's embarrassment was solved.

The yachting party were busy with a chance acquaintance they had met in the rotunda. Mrs.

Cartaret had turned to them, and Mrs. Carisbrooke was close to Kate, who was now looking in a bewildered way into the girl's eyes. They seemed to her the violet eyes of the baby who died in her arms years ago at Oakhill. There was a quick spasm of pain at her heart; she was pale to the very lips, but she said to the girl:

"Forgive my rudeness. Your eyes are my excuse. They are very like—like eyes that were dear to me long ago." There was a questioning look in the girl's beautiful eyes; but they closed softly as Kate, *knowing this was "Hagar's" child*, stooped and kissed the blue-veined lids.

Need we wonder that the divine spirit of motherhood has been crowned Queen of Heaven when day after day we see the miracles it works in the hearts of flesh? Hand-in-hand the two went in search of Molly, leaving Mrs. Carisbrooke, who was quickly joined by Grandison and Roane.

The yachting party, with Mrs. Cartaret as cicerone—who was glad to get away from the explosion she feared—were busy examining those wonderful specimens of crude art, those unique illustrations of the Pocahontian period, and the later historic absurdities which now decorate

(and disfigure) the central gallery of the Capitol.

As his wife and his daughter went through the door leading to the library Captain Hartley again hastily made his excuses to his friends: "they were waiting for him in his committee-room."

Hartley had need to be alone. The eternal battle of good and evil was raging within him. In the beginning he had loved his daughter because of her beauty and of a resemblance that flattered his vanity. But love, that works purification through ways that mere reason cannot follow nor understand, was gradually purging the dross of self from his affection for his child. He was becoming capable of sacrifice and of gratitude for her sake. This love for her and his life in her were already apart from that other life he had lived. I can best express my meaning by saying that in his heart he had set up a wall of partition between his vices, with their resultant crimes, and his daughter. His wife's recognition of his daughter—for he did not doubt that Kate had recognized the child she had seen at Oakhill—endangered his wall of partition. Their clasping hands linked his daughter to his crimes. Then, in his thought, he cursed his

sister for the folly of her management. From the first he had felt no particular thankfulness for her interest in the child. Nor did he credit her now with the care, the protection, and name she had given his daughter. With the fatuity of anger he insisted to himself, "that he could have done much better for Mai if Julia had not meddled." Mrs. Cartaret's indulgent kindness to her "ward" had brought about this conjunction that threatened a fresh attack from the tormentors that had found him in Cincinnati, where remorse had so nearly forced him to confession, and where terror had confronted him with a ghost under the lamp-light that had not been altogether laid, for in waking and sleeping dreams he had been pursued by the dumb pleading of the robbed mother. Would she always be dumb? She had refused his offer of money for release of her right in her child. She had left the child with him, but she had made no promise. Would she not assert her right? Twice he had seen her in the hallway of the school in Philadelphia where Mai was. Twice she had nursed the child through slight illnesses. After each of these attacks of her child Lucy's own malady had returned and she had disap-

peared. She was slightly insane—even Dr. Carisbrooke admitted that—and Hartley dared not have her consigned to a mad-house, because of the Carisbrookes and of Leszinksky. And now Julia's folly had brought Mai face to face with the Carisbrookes. They would know; and he fell a-cursing not only in thought but in words. Remorse had not yet brought repentance.

As Grandison and Roane joined Mrs. Carisbrooke, Grandison asked: "Who is this new beauty, this rising star, Mrs. Carisbrooke?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Miss Hilton—some connection of Mrs. Cartaret's. Her first husband was a Hilton, and a precious scamp."

She could not resist this fling at the girl. Consciously—for she understood the hidden relationship—she resented what she defined to herself as "an insult to Kate, this presentation of a relative whom Mrs. Cartaret should have ignored." Unconsciously she was provoked and jealous of the beauty which so eclipsed Molly's.

Colonel Roane. "Had the 'precious scamp' a 'visible admixture' of African blood?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "No; I think the Anglo-Saxon race has to bear the burden of his ill-

deeds. The blood was bad, but I believe it ran in the veins of a white man."

There was a secret triumph in her thought, which it was hard to keep from expression, that, despite the girl's beauty, something betrayed the octoroon to eyes so keen and so experienced as those of the Arkansian slave-owner.

Grandison. "I was sure you were mistaken, Roane. He insisted, Mrs. Carisbrooke, that there was an unmistakable taint of the African in the very perfectness of that rare beauty."

Roane. "Knowing Mrs. Carisbrooke is neither indiscreet in speech nor intolerant of expression of belief founded on reason, I still insist that an honest eighth of the 'Beauty's' blood came from Africa."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What are your proofs?"

Grandison. "Yes, proofs—give us proofs!"

Roane. "They are difficult to classify, but they are irrefutable. Any negro-trader would see them at once. First, the peculiar color of the eyes."

Grandison. "They are pure violet eyes—'deeply, darkly blue.'"

Roane. "Blue set in ivory. There is no reflection of their color in the surrounding white.

It is simply a dead white up to the line of the iris. Captain Hartley has eyes of the same color, but observe the difference in the reflection."

Mrs. Carisbrooke (*blankly*). "Captain Hartley?"

Grandison (*repeats*). "Captain Hartley! By Jove, there is a likeness! What do you mean, Roane?"

Roane. "Simply to point the difference there is between the violet eyes of an octoroon and those of a Caucasian."

A woman's persistence in inquiry, always remarkable, is peculiarly so when her flounces skirt the edge of a question which it would be indiscreet to attack directly. The ingenuity, the dexterity, the mental agility then shown by a daughter of Eve have a certain charm for me. A stolid man is always wondering what next. It is the much-vaunted attraction of the unknown.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The eye-proof is not decisive."

Grandison. "Nor satisfactory."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You are silenced?"

Roane. "Neither the color nor the wave of

the silky hair do I claim as proofs positive, but they are aids to opinion."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "They are not proofs."

Roane. "No, madam; I admit they are not. But there is a test, an infallible test; only I cannot apply it. Neither could I see the base of the glove-covered nails."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Then the nails are proofs?"

Roane. "Assuredly. Where there is mixed blood the base of the rosiest nails will be slightly discolored. Just the faintest tinge of yellow or brown is proof."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "And the infallible test?"

Roane. "Is the point of the nose."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What absurdity is that? Why, the girl's nose is simply perfect!"

Grandison. "Could not be purer Greek if it had been cut by Phidias or Praxiteles."

Roane. "Shape is nothing in the proof. The test is not a question of shape, neither is it of color. And who dare touch that lovely nose to resolve the question?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke and Grandison at once. "Touch the nose!"

Roane. "Yes; to feel if the cartilage is di-

vided at the point. In the pure-blooded African the cartilage of the nose is undivided and wholly unsupported by an upspringing bridge. With the 'visible admixture' you get the support, but there is still a drooping and undivided cartilage. In the octoroon, and even the quadroon, the nose may be the arched Roman or the straight and shapely Greek, but as long as there is a drop of the African blood there is no perceptible division of the cartilage of the nostrils at the outer point of the nose. In the white race the division is marked."

Mrs. Carisbrooke and Grandison, feeling their noses. "Yes!"

Roane. "That is the infallible test. But who dare apply it to the 'Beauty'?"

Nothing more was said, and the "nosologists" looked guiltily at each other as the "Beauty" appeared with Molly in the open doorway. But Mrs. Carisbrooke had privately determined that a certain scientific looking into things is not only permissible but laudable.

Kate had joined the girls, and Horry came to the waiting trio of scientists and made this complaint to Mrs. Carisbrooke:

Horry. "Madam, I am thrown overboard. I

am an offering to the sharks that swim in the troubled waters through which sail the ships that carry the fortunes of bachelors. Once again, madam, your daughter has discarded me. It is a vicious habit she acquired in her childhood. You should look to it that she correct it. She hinted an apology that adds to the bitterness of defeat. I did not dare disturb the calm serenity of her soul with question, but I ask you to settle my doubt, to end my misery. Is there another Richmond in the field—another and a better?"

The tall, thin figure was stiffened to its utmost height, and the long, thin, shapely fingers and the clear hazel eyes pointed and flashed the question.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Your regrets are as nothing to mine. You know you were my ideal of my coming son-in-law. But, alas for my dream! there is another—and such another! Where you are tall, he is short; where you are thin, he is thick; where you are courteous, and wise, and witty, he is brusque and—well, he is solidly sensible, but not bright. Then he is bullet-headed and red-headed, where you are—"

She paused, and Horry, who had accented each

comparison by a tragi-comic pose, touched his thin gray hair.

Horry. "I see him, madam! More for you than for myself—though the gods know how I suffer -- do I regret his success. Why, look on that picture and on this. You had not finished your sketch? But see this classic front, these abundant locks, sable-silvered. Why, madam, for her to make such a choice, to give me such a rival, is the poisoned sting in the arrow of fate. The subtle irony of malignant fortune runs through every word that has thus brought me face to face with disaster."

Roane. "Is this a farce, Mrs. Carisbrooke, or is Miss Molly engaged? I presume so old a friend of yours, so devoted an admirer of Miss Molly's, as I am may ask."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I thought your friend had told you—for he is your friend. Molly is engaged to Major Carson."

Roane. "Then I can most sincerely offer my congratulations. May I congratulate Miss Molly, or is it not to be told?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It is not to be proclaimed from the house-tops, but it may be quietly

spoken. To me it is yet more a subject for condolence than congratulation."

Grandison. "Your loss is great—an only daughter."

Roane. "But you gain a son, Mrs. Carisbrooke."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Such a son!"

Horry. "And to lose such a daughter!"

Roane. "That is Carson's gain. If it offend you, Mrs. Carisbrooke—but I do not believe it will—I must say it. I think they are very fairly mated. A brave, true, and loyal gentleman has won a very perfect wife."

Horry. "Is the end of all things near a hand? When will this marriage come to pass?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "When she and Carisbrooke please; I wash my hands of the matter."

Roane. "I do not think it will be long before you are out of your agony, Horry; the proclamation is now being made, Mrs. Carisbrooke."

She turned to see both Molly's hands in Carson's, who, regardless of the place and the little assembly, kissed the broad, fair brow of his promised wife.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The coachman who drives a four-in-hand needs to keep his wits about him and his reins untangled. Since I started with these skittish and badly-broken colts I have put down but few of the people booked at the start, though I have been forced to take up fresh passengers at every stopping-place. The shadowy and silent "Hagar" still sits beside me, and I have dropped but two of the outsiders. But the places inside are fast being filled by the people I pick up by the way. I know the colts are likely to be over-weighted, but what can I do? There are yet empty places, and when I would fain pass the wayfarer who beckons, some "nob" on top calls out, "That is the person I told you we should find about here. Halloo, driver! do you hear? Let me down or take him (or her) up!" So another is entered for the trip, as there are empty places inside and seats in the rumble. What am I to do? I dare not lose a first-class passenger and bring the contractors in for damages, though in this over-effort there is danger of an upset.

[Let us drop this prolonged simile for a grievance.]

A WISE reviewer found a double authorship in my last book. I think the same sagacious critic may by the same rule find a dozen hands in this. There are "pot-hooks and hangers," the round letters of the school-boy and essays at copper-plate; there are the long, skipping lines of a French running-hand and the heavy down-slopes of an English writer, the slant of a cynic and the slow uprise of a melancholy humorist. The critic had and he shall have reason

for the petty sarcasm. To save a rewriting, which might give him pain, I am willing to confess there are many of me. There is the penny-a-liner; he, poor wretch, comes in the headachy days when debts are pressing and there is a general emptiness in this work-a-day world. There is the valiant braggart who would fain be fine and ruffle it with the wits who have swaggered in the sunshine of popular favor; what splashes and dashes he leaves upon the page! There is the poor scholar who courts the muses and sighs after greatness; he tenders me broken hexameters and scraps from the Virgilians. And on rare days—alackaday that the white stones are so few!—comes the honest worker, who writes the truths he has gathered in the school of a bitter experience, which he pitifully tries to sweeten with the pictured reflection of the good deeds he has seen shining in this naughty world.

Having headed this chapter with sops, with which I pray the gods may soften Cerberus, I shall leave those people we met in the rotunda to talk love (as a few of them will do without our leave) or politics (which is hot work with the thermometer up in the nineties and threats of secession in the throats of all the Southerners)

while I go back and see what changes these four years have worked to the Leszinkskys.

I think I have said somewhere—but if I have it will bear repetition, and if I have not I say it now—that there was always in the manner of Stanislaus Leszinksky to any woman thrown upon his care a tender solicitude, a careful watching of little things, an anxious haste to shield from the small discomforts of life, a magnetic consciousness of feminine wants, a sympathetic softening of harsh or discordant surroundings, which won him the loving gratitude of every woman thus placed.

Rue's experience with the dominie, though it may have failed to teach her aught else, had taught her to understand and appreciate the rare minor excellences of her father's character.

After the Oxford *fiasco* Rue was for two months at Rosebank—neither ill nor well, but, as Dr. Carisbrooke decided, needing careful watching, good nursing, and rest. The watching the doctor gave, Lucy was the nurse, and Molly the restful companion.

In September Major Leszinksky came and took Rue for a short visit to Mount Hope, intending to go thence to Philadelphia. But there was

such a nervous outbreak when the time of parting with her father came that he could not resist her prayer to go home with him, although there she was a discordant element—she had never forgiven her stepmother for the taunt which she believed had driven the Big Chief to his death, nor for the selfishness of fright which had shut Mrs. Carson off from a place of refuge. Had the family still been at Bouie's Hill, where all these mournful recollections centred, Rue would have steeled herself to the parting with her father and conquered her dislike to Northern schools. But Leszinksky had been ordered to one of the posts on the Rio Grande, and the change and the free life on the frontier, to which Rue had long been accustomed, seemed to him the most promising cure for a malady which threatened to undermine the child's strength.

The difficulty for Major Leszinksky was to harmonize his household. His wife's health was frail, and her temper sullenly jealous and easy to take offence. To keep Rue out of the house, to restore her strength and build up her mental as well as bodily health, he made her his comrade.

At drill, in camp inspection, in the short ex-

cursions to the neighboring settlements, even in the busy hours of his office-work, Rue was always by her father's side. She had been taught to ride in her babyhood; she was now taught to swim, to shoot, to fence. She was truly a child of the camp. Every soldier in the old regiment was her personal acquaintance and comrade. She was first at parade, first in the saddle when the bugle sounded. No words of compliment ever brought to her the thrill of delight she felt when she heard Carson say to her father: "That child does more for the behavior of the troops than the entire War Department could do. The greatest blackguard among them is a gentleman in her presence. I am sure they would follow her lead if she charged the very devil himself."

The last phrase so captivated Rue's fancy that it led to results that changed the manner of her life. Her accomplishments were already those of a boy. Her education was of necessity masculine and desultory. Her father was her tutor; the few hours he could spare from his regimental work were spent in study with his daughter, and then he never tolerated carelessness or idleness. But the great evil in this way

of life was that Rue was rapidly acquiring the manner of a boy accustomed to rule by the slightest expression of will, and to whom instant obedience was given.

During that fall a young officer, just graduated from West Point, had joined the regiment. With the unreasoning prejudice of a child, which, with the frankness of a child, Rue took no pains to hide, she disliked the new-comer. Her father's reproof forced a cold politeness, though even that was grudgingly given. Either from quick magnetic sympathy with their favorite, or else from the same indefinable sensation of repulsion, the regiment disliked the young fellow. When on duty he was obeyed, but the obedience was not the warm, spontaneous acceptance of command which is given where rule is enforced by respect and personal regard. With the quick perception of a child Rue felt this, and felt also that the officers were in a measure affected by it.

The young lieutenant was exceedingly handsome and something of a dandy. Through that quality a way of offence was found.

In Lieutenant Bradnor's first scouting expedition he had Bob Stearns for guide. The lieutenant, unlearned in frontier life, came to the

start in a spotless new uniform. Rue's step-mother was unusually ill, and her father had gone with the surgeon to his wife's room, so Rue was alone at the office. She called Bob to make some change in a new collar he had given Bruno, and said in an undertone:

"Take the lieutenant through the swamp, Bob, through the black mud and the under-growth."

"Yes, Capin Rue," he answered, with a broad grin of approval.

"If he stands that without spoiling, swim the 'cut-off.' That dandy rig needs christening."

He touched his cap; and as the men rode by she saw the mirthful mischief in the bronzed faces, and knew the order had passed down the line. They returned at sundown. The lieutenant, wet, scratched, dirty, and furious, dismounted to give his report to Major Leszinksky. As he passed Rue she laughed and walked carelessly to where the men waited.

"You did it well, Bob."

"Yes, Capin Rue; the chaparral was tougher and the mud blacker'n usual."

There was half-suppressed laughter, and the lieutenant turned to look. He understood the

conspiracy. His report was soon made and he left hurriedly for his quarters. Major Leszinksky came to the door and called, in a voice which indicated that he was angry:

"Stearns!"

"Here, major."

"Go to the guard-house and report yourself under arrest."

"Yes, major."

"Take the men with you."

"Are they all under arrest, major?"

"Yes."

"Papa! papa! please do not punish the men. It was my fault. I gave the order."

"What order?"

"The order—to—to—spoil the lieutenant's dandy uniform and scratch him in the bushes."

Her father went hastily into the office, whilst she followed the squad to the guard-house with words of cheer, and then rushed off to beg Carson's intercession in their behalf. On her way back she met Lieutenant Bradnor, who had changed his clothing and was going to supper. She laughed and saluted him, but he passed without look or sign of recognition. Bruno, accustomed to friendly greeting, stopped with

a mild look of expectancy, and received only a vicious and severe kick. The dog growled, then looked at his mistress; the kick was repeated and he sprang at the aggressor. In an instant Rue caught Bruno's collar and held him, saying:

"You are a coward or you would not have kicked my dog. You would like to strike me, if you dared. Although you are not a gentleman, and not entitled to be treated like a gentleman, you belong to our regiment. *I* ordered you to be swamped and scratched, so I will give you your revenge. I shoot better than you, but you fence well and the chances are equal. Will you try the foils? You can take the buttons off."

"My daughter!" And her father's arm was around her and she was led to the house. He showed that he was grieved and annoyed. He reasoned with her, ridiculed her outburst, and tried in all ways to make her see the enormity of her offence. When this failed to cool her temper he drew her to him, held her in his arms, and talked to her lovingly and tenderly, blaming himself for her rough training. This broke her stubbornness, and in a rush of repentant feeling she offered to apologize to the lieutenant.

"No, you shall not do that. You shall never violate your conscience through your affection for me. You are not sorry for the wrong—you are only sorry I am grieved."

"Yes, sir; but that is enough. I do dislike the dandy, but I did wrong to give that order to Bob. The men would risk any punishment to please me; so all the more it was selfish to send them where I did not go. I know they would charge the devil himself, if I bid them."

"I did not know you used such language. I did not believe you had learned such expressions. I trusted the regiment—its affection for you, its respect for me."

"Do not blame the men, papa. I heard Uncle Billy tell you that. The men never swear if they see me, but—I *have* caught some phrases in the garrison."

"Such as—?"

"Well, I don't swear wickedly. I say 'the devil' sometimes, and the other day when I cut my hand with Bruno's collar—"

"What then?"

"I did say—well, I swore. Uncle Billy heard me. He spoke to me about it and about mamma; so you see I have dropped it."

"I hear how you have dropped it."

"But, papa, about the men—I was the only one to blame. I wish you would put me in the guard-house and let off Bob and the others."

"And when you were out again I presume you would still insist upon a duel with Bradnor?"

"I would rather like it, but I suppose it can be arranged without that. If he will apologize for kicking Bruno I shall be perfectly willing to apologize for the mud and the briers."

Rue's ludicrous earnestness made further reproof impossible. But the result was worse than reproof. The next day Major Leszinksky wrote to arrange for her going to Philadelphia. She might stay at home until after Easter; with two months more of liberty she must perforce be content.

Bob and the men were released with a reprimand for their "stupidity as guides." Carson was the orator on that occasion.

The entire story was soon garrison property.

The swamp and the duel were too much for Bradnor. The ridicule of the "juniors" and the severely respectful demeanor of the men made life on the frontier (where so much depends on

friendly relations with associates) unendurable. He asked to be exchanged, and, that failing, resigned.

The last two months Rue passed at the fort brought her more of pain than happiness. It was a constant leave-taking which seemed to pull at every fibre of Rue's being. She was a product of the plains, and she instinctively dreaded the trammels of a more formal society. The stalwart troopers and rough border settlers were devoted to the child born and brought up in their own rugged way of life. But from the formalists of an older civilization she knew she could only expect a patronizing toleration. Every reproof, every suggestion of improvement she had heretofore received was put in the form of a comparison. There were in the far-off East models of deportment that she detested—correct and perfect patterns that made Rue despair of the future. So her grief grew with what it fed on, and a longing for solitude came upon her. She took lonely rides to outlying ranches and Indian lodges, until one evening, after a late return, her father, seeing the blown condition of her pony, inquired the distance she had gone and forbade her leaving the fort without an escort.

For the last two weeks of her stay at the fort, accompanied by Bob Stearns and "the squad," Rue was almost constantly in the saddle. The unrest and fever of grief were upon her, a wild yearning for escape from what she regarded as a coming imprisonment. She could only lose thought in the rush of a mad gallop, in the flying feet of a wild mustang, until even those hard riders found the following difficult. It was wonderful, their sympathy with her moods and her sorrow. Not a word of remonstrance was uttered, no matter into what difficulties her reckless disregard of paths led; always a subdued, respectful tone. Once when she left them, bidding them wait, and climbed the steep bluff, driven by the savage instinct that would hide pain, she dismounted and threw herself on the ground in a tempest of grief. The mustang started back to the fort; the men caught him and waited whilst Bob sought the unhorsed rider.

"Capin! Capin Rue!" he said softly, and when she looked up, through blinded eyes, it was to see great tears falling over his weather-beaten face.

"I was oneasy, Capin Rue, and thought I had

better come whar I mought hear you call, so be I was needed. You're lookin' mighty white and peaked lately. And the pity on it's a-wearin' all the good out-en the regiment. I wish we'd broke that pesky leftenant's neck the day we 'swamped' him, so be an' half on us had been court-martialled and shot for it. Then the major wouldn't a-got this school projec' in his head."

"It was not that—not altogether that, Bob—I need the school—papa is right to send me—and you fellows—must save him trouble when I am gone—I won't have any grumbling or insubordination among the men."

"No, Capin Rue."

"You will be good to my little sister—and teach her to ride, Bob—you taught me—make her strong and healthy—let her have my old pony—it's gentle—and—*talk of me to her sometimes*—you must never forget me—you—all—"

Here there was a complete double break, until, with a gasp and a broken sob, the girl stilled herself and led the way to where the men waited. The hardest of the wrench was over. That day was the burial of Rue's childhood.

In the beginning of the spring Rue was in her

place at school, a solitary child in that busy, miniature world. The heiress of the great Cartaret estate would have given it all for one wild ride over the rolling prairie; as for friendship, she had left that out there with "Bob Stearns and the squad," with the comrades of the camp. She had nothing in common with these well-bred, conventional young ladies; their conversation was to her an unknown tongue. She had, however, the quick perception of a savage, and felt that she was being scrutinized, and criticised, and judged. Her refuge was her pride, her shield her dogged will; so they thought her cold and haughty, when she was only shy and sorrow-stricken with a terrible homesickness, with a craving for the free, glad life she had left.

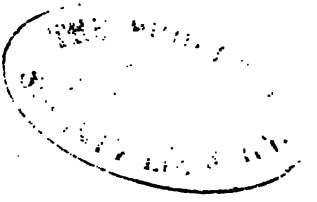
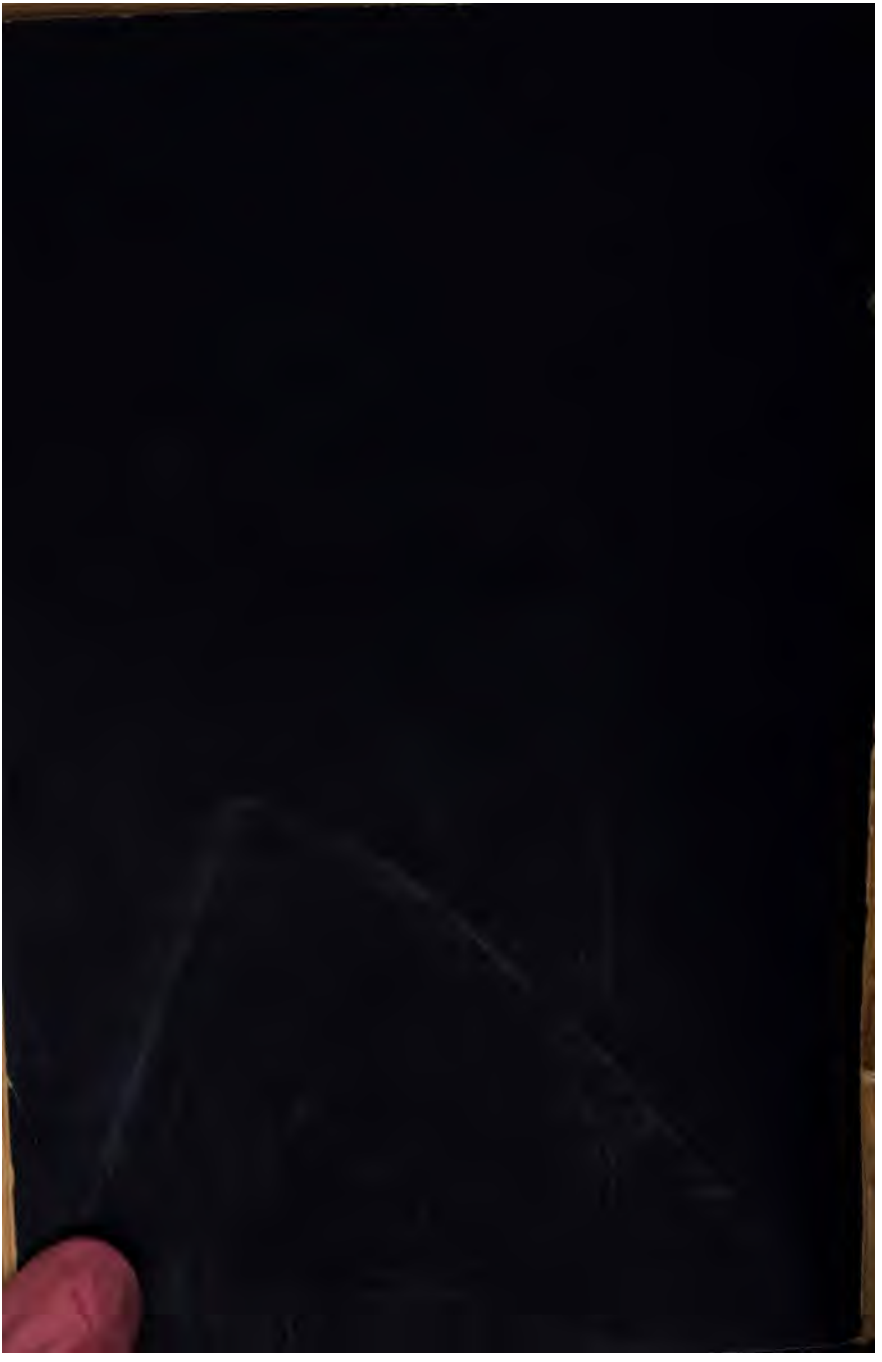
Day after day some new lesson was learned from human books. The shams and deceits of this little world of school were transparent to the inexperienced but truthful child. She had a boy's respect for truth, a boy's scorn of a lie; he could not understand those feminine twists of reasoning that accepted as eminently proper the polite deceptions of society. So out of her pride and her shyness Rue built up a wall of separation that was also a wall of defence. She

had been forced by her obedience to her father to give up the ways of life that delighted her. She would not be forced to adopt other ways that were distasteful, that were utterly repugnant to her. Moreover, she knew her father would forgive her even should she outrage the decorous dignity of varnished respectability with a wild protest against its shams.

Altogether this school was an evil in Rue's life. The fault was partly that she so antagonized her surroundings that she failed to see the good that modestly retired before the barriers she had built. The failure was partly her fault; it was also her misfortune. It supplemented all the evil of her early training with a greater evil—it made her distrustful of culture, of refinement; honesty must have a rugged exterior or it could not be honesty. To self-will and self-assertion, grown out of the old habit of command, was now added indifference to opinion, contempt of judgment, and utter scorn for the rules and conventionalities of society. She had so confounded the true and the false with this absurd classification, which recognized only extremes, that but for her father and her faith in him her life would have set itself in fruitless

opposition to all order, to all law. Her belief in her father was the anchor that held through it all.

Three years had passed when one morning Rue was sent for to the parlor. Her father was there, but aged and broken, his hair silvered; the strong man was bent with the burden of life. He pressed his daughter to his heart, and then put in her arms a delicate little girl clad in mourning.

"Her mother is dead, Rue, and I brought her to you. When I die she will have nothing, no one to look to but you. I know I can trust her with you, my daughter."

"She is your child, she is my sister; she is the Benjamin of our house. On my faith as your daughter, on my honor as my mother's child, I promise you to prefer her happiness to my own. If I ever fail in this, or swerve from it a hair's-breadth, may God desert me in my need!"